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New York

President: Mr. Insanally ..... (Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 11.20 a.m.

Mudslides in Colombia

The President: Before turning to the items on our agenda for this morning, may I, on behalf of all the members of the Assembly, extend our deepest sympathy to the Government and the people of Colombia on the tragic loss of life and extensive material damage that have resulted from the mudslides following the earthquake that recently struck Colombia.

May I also express the hope that the international community will show its solidarity, and respond promptly and generously to any request for help.

I now call on the representative of Colombia.

Mr. Rey (Colombia) *(interpretation from Spanish):* On behalf of the Government of Colombia, I wish to express our sincere gratitude to you, Mr. President, for your words of condolence and solidarity on the recent painful tragedy in my country. Colombia deeply appreciates the kind words of the international community, and of the United Nations in particular, on these tragic events.

On 6 June 1994, a strong earthquake in the south-western area of Colombia caused serious mud slides. An enormous mass of mud and vegetation slid into numerous rivers, forming gigantic dikes, which later succumbed to the force of the pent-up waters. Dozens of tremendous avalanches swept away towns and villages.

It is difficult to assess the true dimensions of the destruction - of actual number of avalanches and mud slides, the number of towns affected and the number of people killed and injured. The event took place in a remote area 40 miles wide, not readily accessible to census-takers. Indeed, at the time of the tragedy we had no exact population figures, nor any definite information on the type of housing involved or on what services might be locally available.

The causes of the tragedy were not just natural. The advance of deforestation had weakened what used to be solid mountains in the region. Some experts say that had it not been for the deforestation, the mountainsides would not have washed away so quickly; there might have been no avalanches and no dikes. In short, there would not have been a tragedy of this magnitude.

The deforestation, in turn, was caused largely by social ills. The affected area is an impoverished one. For centuries the indigenous population of the Paéz Valley had been living in 16 reservations. In recent years, settlers and natives had cleared land and built shacks on the banks of rivers - the most vulnerable places in the event of an avalanche. This was not just an act of nature: The disaster was compounded by poverty.

The magnitude of the tragedy is revealed by the following eye-witness account by a native inhabitant:

"The river engulfed us. The mountains were hurling rocks down upon us. The earth was

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shaking; then it opened up to swallow us all. Everyone was swept away by the current, even my children.

"Look at the town. There is nothing left: neither the church nor the school; the main street is gone. Shall I tell you what happened to my wife? She was swallowed up by the earth as well. She disappeared!"

This sad experience in Colombia shows how very important it is to have mechanisms of cooperation for the prevention of natural disasters. In the United Nations, this is a subject that should be given increased attention. By an unhappy coincidence, the tragedy in Colombia took place just a few days after the World Conference on the Reduction of Natural Disasters in Yokohama, Japan. Colombia had participated actively in that Conference.

In Colombia, as in other countries, the characteristics of land occupation, the poverty of large segments of the population and the pressures on resources have all made people more vulnerable to natural disasters. It is not just a question of disaster relief: We need prevention. We need cooperation and an exchange of experience in that respect.

While my delegation expresses particular thanks for the assistance given by various countries and agencies, we do want to appeal to the international community to mobilize additional resources to make it possible at least to mitigate the current situation.

This immense task must be supported - a task that covers some 10,000 square kilometres and a population of some 50,000 persons in the area most seriously affected. Over 12,000 people have been accommodated in camps to provide them with basic services, either flown in or trucked in. A great deal of work is necessary to reconstruct the villages and promote their economic and social rehabilitation. In more general terms, support for Colombia can also be decisive in establishing medium- and long-term programmes to prevent or mitigate the results of natural disasters.

I wish to express once more, Mr. President, our appreciation for your statement of support for Colombia in this time of tragedy, and for your kind remarks in this connection at this special meeting of the General Assembly.

Agenda item 8 *(continued)*

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

Request for the reopening of the consideration of agenda item 96 (International Conference on Population and Development)

Note by the Secretary-General (A/48/952)

The President: The Assembly will now consider a note by the Secretary-General, contained in document A/48/952.

In his note, the Secretary-General informs the General Assembly that

> "... the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1993/76 of 30 July 1993, recommended that the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Population and Development become a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, and decided that the report of the Preparatory Committee on its second session should be submitted to the Assembly at its forty-eighth session, to be considered under agenda item 96 entitled, 'International Conference on Population and Development'". *(para. 1)*

The General Assembly, in its decision 48/448 of 21 December 1993, took note of the note by the Secretary-General on the report of the Preparatory Committee (A/48/492). The Preparatory Committee held its third session at Headquarters from 4 to 22 April 1994. At that session it approved the provisional rules of procedure of the Conference.

In order for the General Assembly to approve the provisional rules of procedure before the opening of the Conference, which is to be held at Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994, it will be necessary to reopen consideration of agenda item 96, entitled "International Conference on Population and Development".

May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to reopen consideration of agenda item 96, entitled "International Conference on Population and Development"?

It was so decided.

The President: Representatives are aware that this agenda item was allocated to the Second Committee. However, in order for the Assembly to proceed expeditiously on this matter, may I take it that the Assembly wishes to consider the rules of procedure of the Conference directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President: I should like to inform members that agenda item 96 will be considered at a later date, to be announced in the Journal.

Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms [114 (b)]

The President: Members will recall that this item was closed at the 89th meeting, held on 14 February 1994. The item, which was closed inadvertently, should have been retained in the agenda in the light of paragraph 4 of the report of the Third Committee, circulated as document A/48/632/Addendum 4.

Paragraph 4 contains a proposal that states that the open-ended working group of the Third Committee should, upon completion of the issue of the election of a High Commissioner for Human Rights, consider other aspects of the implementation of the recommendations of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, as set out in paragraphs 17 and 18 of Part II of the said Declaration.

May I take it, therefore, that the Assembly agrees that sub-item (b) of agenda item 114, entitled "Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms" is retained in the agenda of the forty-eighth session?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 133 *(continued)*

Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara: report of the Fifth Committee (Part III) (A/48/816/Add.2)

The President: I request the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Mahbub Kabir of Bangladesh, to introduce the report of the Fifth Committee, which is contained in document A/48/816/Add.2.

Mr. Kabir (Bangladesh), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee: I have the honour today to present to the General Assembly the report of the Fifth Committee concerning agenda item 133, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara". Part III of the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/48/816/Add.2.

In paragraph 6 of the report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.69, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the Fifth Committee which is before it today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote or position.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401 the Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I also remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the report of the Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take a decision in the same manner as was done in the Committee.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of part III of its report.

The draft resolution was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote.

May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 48/250 B).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 133.

Agenda item 3 *(continued)*

Credentials of representatives to the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly

(b) Third report of the Credentials Committee (A/48/512/Add.2)

The President: Members will recall that the Assembly considered the first and second reports of the Credentials Committee at its 43rd and 86th meetings on 29 October and 21 December 1993 and adopted resolutions 48/13 A and B.

The draft resolution recommended by the Credentials Committee in paragraph 9 of its third report reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Having considered the third report of the Credentials Committee and the recommendation contained therein,

"Approves the third report of the Credentials Committee."

The Assembly will now take action on the draft resolution recommended by the Credentials Committee in paragraph 9 of its third report (A/48/512/Add.2).

The Credentials Committee adopted this draft resolution without a vote.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 48/13 C).

The President: I am very pleased to invite the delegation of South Africa to proceed to occupy its proper place in the General Assembly Hall.

The delegation of South Africa took its place in the General Assembly Hall.

The President: I extend a very warm welcome to the delegation of South Africa, as it resumes its seat in the General Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 3?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 38 *(continued)*

Elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa:

(a) Report of the Special Committee against Apartheid (A/48/22/Add.l)

(b) Report of the Secretary-General (A/48/523/Add.l)

(c) Draft resolutions (A/48/L.58; A/48/L.59

The President: Members will recall that the Assembly concluded its debate on this agenda item at its 80th plenary meeting, on 15 December 1993, and that at its 85th plenary meeting, on 20 December 1993, the Assembly adopted four resolutions that had been submitted under this agenda item.

At its 88th meeting, on 21 January 1994, the Assembly considered another report of the Secretary-General and adopted a fifth resolution on this item.

The Assembly now has before it the addendum to the report of the Special Committee against Apartheid, distributed as document A/48/22/Add.l and the addendum to the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa, contained in document A/48/523/Add.1.

In this connection the Assembly has before it two draft resolutions contained in documents A/48/L.58 and A/48/L.59.

Before calling on the first speaker, I should like to propose that the list of speakers on this item be closed today at 12 noon.

If I hear no objection, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

The President: I therefore request those representatives wishing to inscribe their names on the list of speakers to do so as soon as possible.

I now call on the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, Mr. Ibrahim Gambari of Nigeria, to make a statement in the course of which he will introduce draft resolution A/48/L.58.

Mr. Gambari (Nigeria), Chairman of the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid: South Africa is free at last. And it is therefore with great joy and immense pride that, on behalf of the Special Committee against Apartheid, I warmly welcome free South Africa to a place of honour in this family of nations - the General Assembly.

Two years ago, when I was re-elected for the second time as Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, and a month after the convening of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA I), I expressed the fervent hope to be the very last Chairman of this Committee. I was confident that despite its flaws, CODESA had, for the first time in the history of apartheid South Africa, brought together former foes at the negotiating table and thereby raised hopes that a peaceful settlement of the conflict in South Africa was not only possible, but also imminent.

Today, my wish to be the last Chairman of our Committee has, happily, been fulfilled. The world has witnessed not only the end of apartheid, but also the active transfer of power to a non-racial and democratic Government of National Unity, and therefore the Special Committee against Apartheid, established some 31 years, has completed its mandate. Apartheid is dead, and in its place we now have a democratic political system that guarantees equality, peace and justice for all its people, irrespective of their colour, their race, their creed, their religion and their sex.

The United Nations, and in particular the Special Committee against Apartheid, should take deserved pride in the honourable role it has played over the years in mobilizing international support for the elimination of apartheid and in promoting support for the peace process that recently resulted in the establishment of a democratic and non-racial society in South Africa. It should be pointed out, however, that the road to South Africa's democracy has been a long and arduous one. There were times when the situation looked so bleak and so hopeless that some among us never thought we would live to see the day when apartheid would be declared dead and buried. None the less, the various setbacks experienced during the course of the international campaign against apartheid never stopped or deterred the Special Committee against Apartheid from making its relentless efforts towards the elimination of apartheid and the establishment of a non-racial and democratic South Africa.

The events of the past two years have proved that the South African people and their leaders, in a remarkable display of tolerance, wisdom and foresight, were able to see the peace process to its successful conclusion. As the Assembly is aware, from 26 to 29 April 1994 the first universal suffrage elections were held in South Africa and were judged to have been free and fair. On 10 May 1994 Mr. Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as the State President of the new Republic of South Africa, and a Government of National Unity was established shortly thereafter.

A new era has thus been ushered in South Africa, and what a glorious era it promises to be - not only for the people of South Africa but also for the southern African region, the African continent and the world as a whole!

During our last and most recent mission to South Africa, the delegation of the Special Committee was immensely impressed with the spirit of cooperation and reconciliation prevailing in the country. In our meeting with President Mandela, he told us that there now existed a great deal of goodwill among the political parties of South Africa and among its peoples. The elections, and in particular the establishment of the Government of National Unity, he said, had brought about a new spirit of cooperation. The Special Committee shares President Mandela's optimism, and he certainly has our best wishes for the future of a new South Africa.

With democracy finally achieved in South Africa, however, the biggest challenge facing the new Government is to address the enormous socio-economic imbalance resulting from decades of apartheid. It is the hope and recommendation of the Special Committee against Apartheid that the international community will continue to render the necessary financial and economic assistance to the new South Africa, so that it can consolidate the foundations of the new, non-racial constitutional order and launch the country on a path of sustained growth and development. Our Committee believes that South Africa, reconciled with itself, has the makings of an economic powerhouse. Members of the Special Committee against Apartheid will continue to be true friends of South Africa in the General Assembly and other international forums.

I should now like to thank the Member States of our Organization for their moral and material support for the South African cause and for the immense contributions they have made individually and collectively to the peaceful elimination of apartheid. I am proud to acknowledge the special role of my own country, Nigeria, in steadfast support for the international efforts towards the eradication of apartheid. We also want to thank successive Secretaries-General for their perseverance and their dedication in implementing faithfully the various mandates contained in relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions over the years, in particular those relating more recently to the establishment and operations of the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa and its contribution to the implementation of the National Peace Accord and to the electoral process.

Our gratitude goes also to the entire staff of the Centre against Apartheid, who have worked tirelessly over the years, often under difficult circumstances and at times well beyond the call of duty. I want, on behalf of our Committee, to thank Mr. Johan Nordenfelt, as well as all former Directors of the Centre against Apartheid, in particular Mr. Sotirios Mousouris, for their support and cooperation throughout the existence of the Special Committee against Apartheid. I would also like to thank all my predecessors who served faithfully as Chairmen of the Special Committee.

Finally, and above all, the Committee wishes to pay special tribute to the people of South Africa for their courage, resilience and steadfastness. There is no doubt that the political events that have unfolded in South Africa are primarily their victory. It is our hope and conviction that the statesmanship demonstrated in the negotiations, throughout the elections and in the establishment of the Government of National Unity will continue as South Africa consolidates its non-racial and multiparty democracy. The international community has been a contributor to this happy outcome, but it is also a beneficiary of the unique process which brought about a new, non-racial democracy in South Africa. Many countries, including many of those represented in this General Assembly, that are presently torn by racial, ethnic and other forms of conflict which may appear intractable would do well to draw the lessons from the successful efforts of the South African people and their leaders to transcend their differences through peaceful negotiations and forge a common future. The victory against racism and racial oppression in South Africa is another great lesson for the international community as a whole.

At this stage, I would like to introduce, with great pride and satisfaction, the draft resolution (A/48/L.58) sponsored by my delegation. I wish in particular to draw the attention of the General Assembly to operative paragraphs 2, 4, 8 and 11, which express our joy over, and appreciation of, not only the peaceful manner in which the South African conflict has been resolved, but also the spirit of consensus that has prevailed during the past four years in our united and determined effort to bring apartheid to an end. I am also particularly gratified by our continued commitment to fostering stability in South Africa through increased assistance to the Government and people of South Africa, as called for in operative paragraph 11.

Furthermore, as specifically regards operative paragraph 11, it is understood that the proposed appointment which we recommend that the Secretary-General consider making of a coordinator for United Nations development activities in South Africa would fully comply with the relevant General Assembly resolutions, among them resolutions 47/199 and 48/209, which will be taken as a framework on this matter to ensure full consistency with the spirit and institutional arrangements of the United Nations development system.

As we adopt the draft resolution before us, and as we welcome the representatives of the new South Africa to the community of nations, as represented in the General Assembly, we are thereby closing an important chapter in the history of our Organization where our joint efforts have been crowned with success. The struggle against apartheid has become a mission accomplished. Therefore, we sincerely hope that this draft resolution will be, as the General Assembly has done in recent

years, adopted by consensus, since this is the last time we shall be considering a resolution on this agenda item, the elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic, and non-racial South Africa.

Finally, let us use our common resolve, let us use the lessons learned from the South African experiment, to attempt to turn confrontations into negotiations, to turn hatred into goodwill and to turn swords into ploughshares in an increasingly uncertain and conflictual world.

The President: On behalf of the Assembly, I should like to pay tribute to the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid.

I now call on the Rapporteur of the Special Committee against Apartheid to introduce the Special Committee's report.

Mr. Goel (India), Rapporteur of the Special Committee against Apartheid: I have the honour to introduce on behalf of the Special Committee against Apartheid its report (A/48/22/Add.1) to the General Assembly.

This is the final report of the Special Committee to be presented to the United Nations. After tireless and persistent work to support the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa and to strengthen the process of establishing a non-racial, democratic and united South Africa, as manifest in many resolutions piloted by the Special Committee against Apartheid, in particular General Assembly resolution S-16/1, the mission is coming to an end. Through the adoption of the Interim Constitution and the constitutional principles, the conduct of the first democratic and non-racial elections, and the establishment of the Government of National Unity in South Africa, apartheid has finally come to an end. Resolution 48/159 B, adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 1993, determined that the Special Committee would submit its final report to the Assembly upon completion of its mandate following the establishment of a democratically elected non-racial Government in South Africa. With the submission of this final report and the adoption of the draft resolution in document A/48/L.58, the mandate of the Special Committee will have come to an end. This is indeed a historic occasion in the annals of the United Nations.

As clearly stated in the report, the Special Committee during the period under review and under the chairmanship of Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, followed every step in the process and gave its full support to the democratization process. The Special Committee also highlighted the importance of providing generous assistance to South Africa to overcome the legacy of apartheid.

Having successfully completed its mandate, the Special Committee in this final report has adopted a forward-looking approach, examining the various problems which face the new Government of South Africa and the ways in which the international community, as represented by the United Nations, other multilateral organizations and countries at a bilateral level, could assist the new South Africa in the Herculean tasks it now faces in addressing the critical issues of socio-economic development and economic growth. The most important task, obviously, is to address the existing socio-economic inequalities in the country.

The report comprises five sections, in addition to the introduction.

Section II contains a review of political developments in South Africa, including the transitional structures, the electoral process and an examination of the question of violence. The Special Committee acknowledges the fact that, as a result of the elections and the establishment of the Government of National Unity, there has been a dramatic decrease in violence. In fact, the elections were conducted without a single election-related death or attack on any polling station.

With a view to underlining the importance of addressing the socio-economic issues in South Africa, the third section of the report is devoted to the questions of education, housing, unemployment, health, land and electrification. We are encouraged by the priority given to these issues by the Government of National Unity in South Africa. This section also analyses the role which the international community could play in supporting the South African Government in these areas.

Section IV deals with the international response to development in South Africa. The Special Committee has expressed its appreciation and support for the actions taken by the Secretary-General, his Special Representative and the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa, as well as the Organization of African Unity, the Commonwealth and the European Union. The Committee has also expressed appreciation for the help provided by the many non-governmental organizations during and before the electoral process in South Africa.

We are also grateful to the Non-Aligned Movement for its leading role in the struggle against apartheid.

I would like to draw the attention of the Assembly to the activities of the Special Committee during the period under review. The Chairman of the Special Committee issued a number of statements emphasizing the importance of holding the elections in an atmosphere free of violence and intimidation, and encouraging all political parties to be engaged in the electoral process. The Special Committee sponsored the Seminar on Sustainable Economic Growth and Development in South Africa: Policy Priorities for the Early Years of a Democratic Government. The Seminar was held in London from 22 to 24 January 1994. It also co-sponsored the International Briefing on South Africa's First Democratic and Non-racial Elections, held in Brussels from 28 February to 1 March 1994.

I would like to highlight the importance of the two missions conducted by the Special Committee to South Africa. The first, from 28 February to 5 March 1994, was aimed particularly at encouraging all the political parties to participate in the electoral process. The second, from 6 to 10 June 1994, was a fact-finding mission also intended to assist in determining the needs of South Africa in the post-apartheid era.

The conclusions and recommendations of the report affirm the fact that, with the entry into force of South Africa's first non-racial and democratic Constitution and the holding of South Africa's first non-racial elections, the system of apartheid has been eliminated in South Africa. As has been highlighted in the report, the Committee sincerely hopes that the international community will focus its attention now on generously assisting South Africa in the post-apartheid era.

In conclusion, I would like to convey my thanks to the members of the Committee for their support and the active contribution they made in preparing this report. I would also like to convey my gratitude to the Director and staff of the Centre against Apartheid, without whose dedicated efforts and support of the Drafting Group this report would not have been possible.

The President: I now call on the Chairman of the Committee of Trustees of the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa to introduce draft resolution A/48/L.59.

Mr. Osvald (Sweden), Chairman of the Committee of Trustees of the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa: It is a great honour for me to introduce draft resolution A/48/L.59 on behalf of the sponsors. Let me add that Antigua and Barbuda, Botswana and Japan have expressed the wish to be included in the list of sponsors.

The Trust Fund for South Africa was established as early as 15 December 1965. For almost three decades it has thus served as a means for the United Nations to support victims of apartheid by providing humanitarian, legal and relief assistance to persons persecuted for their opposition to apartheid and to those who were forced into exile.

The Trust Fund has thus been concrete evidence of the support of the United Nations and its Members for the struggle against apartheid, not only in words, but also in deeds. All in all, more than $50 million have been contributed by Member States to the Fund.

In adopting the draft resolution before it, the General Assembly would express its satisfaction at the successful holding of South Africa's first non-racial and democratic elections, the establishment of a Government of National Unity and the coming into effect of a non-racial and democratic constitution.

Considering that the struggle against apartheid, to use the words of the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, is now "a mission accomplished", the General Assembly would agree with the Committee of Trustees of the Trust Fund that the Fund has now fulfilled its mandate and would endorse its recommendation that its functions be discontinued. The Assembly would also endorse the recommendation that the remaining funds, approximately $640,000, be transferred to the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for South Africa to be used for the valuable purposes of that Programme.

The Assembly would furthermore express its appreciation to the Governments, organizations and individuals that have made generous contributions to the Trust Fund, and to the voluntary agencies which have rendered legal, educational and relief assistance to the victims of apartheid throughout the years. It would also express its gratitude to the Secretary-General and the Committee of Trustees for their humanitarian efforts in South Africa.

Finally, the General Assembly would appeal to Member States to offer financial and material support to the reconstruction and development efforts of the new

South African Government and to continue to assist civic society in South Africa.

With these words of introduction, I trust that the draft resolution, like earlier draft resolutions on the Fund, will be adopted without a vote.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolutions A/48/L.58 and A/48/L.59.

We turn first to draft resolution A/48/L.58, entitled "Work of the Special Committee against Apartheid".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/48/L.58?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 48/258 A).

The President: With regard to paragraph 11 of the draft resolution, it is understood that the proposed appointment of a coordinator for United Nations development activities in South Africa will fully comply with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, *inter alia*, resolutions 47/199 and 48/209, which will be taken as the framework for implementation of this matter in order to ensure full consistency with the spirit and institutional arrangements of the United Nations development system.

We now turn to draft resolution A/48/L.59, entitled "United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/48/L.59?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 48/258 B).

The President: In the light of the resolutions just adopted, the agenda item on the elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa is therefore deleted from the agenda of the General Assembly.

I am now very pleased to call on the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to make a statement.

The Secretary-General: The people of South Africa have found their voice. A new South Africa now takes its place among the family of nations. Today South Africa regains its place as a full partner in the work of the United Nations.

The fight against apartheid was the most important struggle of our century. The destruction of apartheid is a tribute to the people of South Africa. It is a testament to the commitment of the international community. It was a struggle that extended far beyond South Africa's borders. It was a struggle that helped to shape the United Nations and to shape the international community as a whole.

South Africa's success, therefore, is also a success for the United Nations. Through the United Nations, the international community expressed its solidarity with the people of South Africa. Through the United Nations, the international community showed its support for their cause and for their struggle.

The contribution of the United Nations was substantial. Its role was significant. By forcefully condemning apartheid, the United Nations reinforced the moral dimension of the struggle. By isolating South Africa, and by assisting the opponents of apartheid, the United Nations expanded the political dimensions of the struggle. By urging and imposing sanctions, the international community added a vital economic dimension to the struggle.

In moral and human terms, the voice of the international community was clearly heard. The General Assembly declared apartheid to be a violation of the Charter. It held apartheid to be a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It labelled apartheid as a crime against the conscience and dignity of all humanity. It monitored and publicized brutality. It worked to mobilize public opinion against injustice.

Politically, the United Nations helped to build and cement an international consensus in support of change. A Special Committee against Apartheid was established in 1962 with the aim of promoting opposition to apartheid. In 1974 the General Assembly barred South Africa from participating in its work, and invited liberation movements to participate as observers. A Trust Fund was established to aid political prisoners and their families. International Anti-Apartheid Year was proclaimed for 1978. Special international days were designated in solidarity with opponents of apartheid. The political message against apartheid was clear.

The United Nations was also instrumental in strengthening the economic dimension of the struggle against apartheid. The Security Council imposed a mandatory arms embargo on South Africa under Chapter VII of the Charter. The General Assembly declared 1982 International Year of Mobilization for Sanctions against South Africa. These actions gave new momentum to anti-apartheid efforts in many Member States.

I am especially proud that the United Nations was also central to international efforts to promote the establishment of a democratic and non-racial South Africa.

The adoption in 1989 of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa was a turning-point. Its adoption cemented a new consensus on South Africa. This consensus was a significant element in creating the conditions for a negotiated solution.

United Nations representatives were made available during the long negotiations. United Nations observers were sent in August 1992 to build confidence and help diminish the spread of political violence. At the request of the Transitional Executive Council, 1,600 United Nations election monitors were sent to observe South Africa's first free and democratic elections in April this year. The successful installation of a Government of national unity is a fitting reward for South Africa, for the United Nations and for the international community as a whole.

(spoke in French)

This spring, at a time when the African continent was too often the sad scene of ethnic confrontation, civil war and border conflicts exacerbating the poverty and underdevelopment that beset much of its population, South Africa provided unforgettable images of faith in the future.

At the recent summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity in Tunis I had the opportunity to say that the first universal-suffrage elections in South Africa and Nelson Mandela's assumption of the presidency of a democratic, non-racial South Africa marked a historic moment. These images of national reconciliation unquestionably reflect a memorable event that will go down in the annals of history. And they can serve as an example to us all.

Welcoming South Africa to the General Assembly and to the various bodies and agencies of the United Nations system is undoubtedly a source of pride for us. For the United Nations, it is also a source of legitimate satisfaction, since for decades the world Organization has spared no effort to help the people of South Africa to struggle against apartheid and to regain its dignity.

Today, we in turn ask South Africa to support us in our struggle for peace and development in Africa. Yes, a democratic, non-racial South Africa can help the African continent in its quest for stability, tolerance and democracy.

The remarkable way in which South Africans rose above their differences and laid the foundations for a multi-party, non-racial democracy is exemplary. The courage, tenacity and historic vision needed to overcome the extraordinary difficulties and ensure a peaceful transition must be a source of hope for the entire African continent.

As a regional economic Power, South Africa can also contribute to the development of the African continent. Moreover, it can be a factor for stability in the region.

South Africa has a major role to play within the General Assembly. Not only Africa, but the entire international community, expects a great deal of it.

It is therefore with equal measures of joy and hope, and indeed with deep emotion, that today I welcome South Africa to the General Assembly.

The President: As President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, I am very pleased to welcome the delegation of the new, democratic and non-racial South Africa to this resumed session of the General Assembly. This is a day for which the international community has long waited. We rejoice that the struggle against the iniquitous system of apartheid has finally been won and that South Africa, a founding Member, can now resume its place at the United Nations.

Surely, the successful outcome of the anti-apartheid campaign must be considered a tribute to the United Nations role in promoting the cause of peace and justice everywhere. At a time when the Organization is frequently criticized for failure to adequately address the world's many problems, let us not forget that it was the moral voice of this Assembly that called incessantly for the freedom of the oppressed people of South Africa.

For the last three decades, this body has been actively concerned with the situation in South Africa. During these years, the Assembly served as a catalyst for international action to persuade the South African minority regime to abandon its policies of apartheid. As the Secretary-General has just said, at its sixteenth special session, held in 1989, the Assembly set the framework for the peaceful transformation of South Africa into a united, democratic and non-racial society, adopting by consensus the historic Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa.

The subsequent release of Mr. Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, as well as the enactment of other measures conducive to free political dialogue, launched the negotiating process on the right track. In spite of considerable obstacles, important accords were reached. Among these were the adoption of universal adult suffrage, the interim Constitution, the constitutional principles which were attached to the interim Constitution, the establishment of the Transitional Executive Council and other bodies, particularly the Independent Electoral Commission, and the holding of the first universal-suffrage elections in South Africa from 26 to 29 April 1994. The people of South Africa who been had denied the franchise for so long demonstrated great enthusiasm in casting their votes. On 5 May South Africa's new Parliament convened and on 10 May the new State President and Government of National Unity were installed, ushering a new era in the country's history.

The United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA) not only helped in observing the elections, but also played an expanded role within the framework of the National Peace Accord. Furthermore, UNOMSA, in keeping with its mandate, undertook the task of coordinating the activities of the observer missions of the Organization of African Unity, the Commonwealth and the European Union. Its contribution to the process of transition must be warmly commended.

In this regard, I would also like to praise the stellar role of the Special Committee against Apartheid and of its distinguished Chairman, Ambassador Gambari of Nigeria. It kept vigil with the South African people during their darkest hours, and in the final days it encouraged non-governmental organizations engaged in voter education and election monitoring. It held and sponsored seminars and conferences in support of political tolerance and a non-racial multi-party democracy in South Africa. It focused the attention of the international community on the need to assist the Government and the people of South Africa in addressing the huge socio-economic disparities resulting from decades of apartheid.

Under new leadership, South Africa today stands ready to face the future. No one who had the privilege of attending the inauguration of Mr. Mandela as State President could fail to be impressed by the joyous zeal with which the South African people greeted their new life. The Government of National Unity in South Africa is now confronting with great determination the major reconstruction and development programmes that will be required to satisfy their aspirations. The spirit of national harmony and reconciliation that prevails in the country augurs well for rapid progress.

At this critical time, the Government and the people of South Africa are deserving of the continuing support of the United Nations and its Member States in their campaign to establish a just and prosperous society. I sincerely hope that assistance, whether on a bilateral or multilateral basis, will be forthcoming in the months and years ahead to help overcome the legacy of apartheid. On behalf of the Assembly, I should like to indicate to the delegation of South Africa our readiness to cooperate closely with them. Inspired by the miracle which has occurred in South Africa, we in the Assembly can work together to achieve other wonders for humanity.

I am now pleased to call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa, Mr. Alfred Nzo, to make a statement.

Mr. Nzo (South Africa): Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, members of the Assembly, I bring you warm greetings from President Nelson Mandela and the Government and all the people of South Africa.

Today is a special occasion for South Africa, as we resume our seat in this august Assembly after an absence of 20 years. It is indeed a pleasure to do so under the presidency of Ambassador Insanally. We are deeply moved by the warmth of our reception here today, and grateful for the generous welcome which has greeted our long-awaited return.

South Africa's long night of diplomatic isolation has finally come to an end. In the past month we have joined the Organization of African Unity and, the Non-Aligned Movement, and we have rejoined the Commonwealth. Today we are back in the United Nations General Assembly. We are mindful of our new international

responsibilities, and we look forward to contributing as best we can to the international community's efforts to make our world a better, safer and more prosperous place.

The United Nations has a long and distinguished record of involvement in the search for freedom and democracy in South Africa. As we celebrate our country's return to the community of nations, we recall with gratitude that, a year after the founding of this Organization, the question of South Africa and the treatment of its people was placed on the agenda of the General Assembly. Now, a year before the fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, the question of the elimination of apartheid has finally been removed from the agenda. The United Nations, as represented by this Assembly, can take pride in its commitment and perseverance in the pursuit of freedom, justice and human rights. We believe South Africa can now serve as an example and an inspiration to the world that the United Nations will not surrender the principles for which it stands.

Indeed, in its consideration of the South African question, various precedents have been created in the United Nations which have helped to focus attention on matters of global importance, particularly in the field of human rights. While the people of South Africa have benefited enormously by the attention given to these matters, the new South African Government will energetically support and encourage all efforts to advance human rights throughout the world, with special emphasis on eliminating the scourge of racial discrimination.

The struggle against apartheid was long, arduous and painful. The support of the international community, and the United Nations in particular, was a critical factor in our final victory over that system. It gives us great pleasure to be able to share our victory with you today. Your constant involvement and assistance throughout those long years is something the people of South Africa will never forget.

Members of the Assembly will recall the fundamental changes which occurred within South Africa, and elsewhere in the world, during the course of 1989. For the first time in decades, there appeared a real possibility that South Africa could come to peace with itself through a process of peaceful negotiations. This situation led to the Declaration of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Organization of African Unity on Southern Africa on the question of South Africa, adopted in Harare on 21 August 1989 - a heroic development which became known as the Harare Declaration, and which was subsequently endorsed by the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries at their Ninth Conference, held in Belgrade from 4 to 7 September 1989.

On 14 December 1989, the United Nations General Assembly took up the issue at its sixteenth special session and adopted the Declaration of Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa. This was of seminal importance, as the fundamental principles upon which the new South Africa would be based were set forth in the Declaration, as were such vital matters as the Climate for Negotiations, and the Guidelines to the Process of Negotiations.

I personally had the privilege of addressing the Assembly during its consideration of the issue, in my capacity as leader of the delegation of the African National Congress. On that day, among other things, I said:

> "In many people throughout the world there is today a great deal of hope that South Africa is on the eve of a fundamental transformation ... of our country into a non-racial democracy." *(A/S-16/PV.3, p. 116)*

Now, nearly five years later, it gives me great pleasure to confirm to this Assembly that that noble objective has finally been achieved. The conditions set forth in the Declaration have been met. South Africa is free.

As South Africa is welcomed back into your midst, and as we resume our work in the General Assembly, we pledge to make the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter our own. Furthermore, President Mandela has made it clear, and demonstrated by the commitment made at Tunis, as well as in regard to South Africa's return to the Commonwealth, that the democratic Government of National Unity will, as a matter of principle meet its financial obligations associated with membership of international organizations.

Uppermost in our minds, however, are the responsibilities which our new Government of National Unity has towards the people of South Africa. Our primary goal is to strive to create a better life for all of our people. To this end we have announced an ambitious Reconstruction and Development Programme in an earnest attempt to address the needs and expectations of millions of our people. We have to demonstrate that democracy will bring tangible benefits to our disadvantaged communities. In this respect, we simply

have to succeed; we have to show that democracy works. We believe our whole region, and Africa in general, will also benefit by our efforts; but we will also have to accept that the cost to South Africa will be enormous.

The Reconstruction and Development Programme will be the centre-piece of the Government's policies over the next five years - probably longer. This year R2.5 billion has been allocated to a special fund in order to begin financing much needed projects, and in each of the following years amounts of R5 billion, R7.5 billion, R10 billion, and R12 billion are expected to be allocated as the Programme gains momentum. Such a massive diversion of resources is critical if the Programme is to succeed, and we have every intention of making a success of it. It does mean, however, that South Africa will have extremely limited resources for anything which falls outside of this Programme, as Government spending has been significantly cut to meet these new demands. The result, we believe, will bring greater stability, peace, and prosperity to our country, our region and, ultimately, our continent. Democracy will be seen to have tangible economic as well as political benefits, and our new-found freedom will make of South Africa the kind of country we have all been working for.

Having said that, allow me to repeat that South Africa is ready to support the United Nations in all its efforts to promote global peace and prosperity. In particular, we are looking forward to expanding relations with the various agencies in the United Nations family, not only because of their valuable role in the future development in South Africa but also because of the opportunity for South Africa to contribute to international upliftment programmes.

With regard to Rwanda, South Africa is acutely aware of the suffering of innocent civilians there. I am happy to report that yesterday I informed the Secretary-General of the United Nations that South Africa has available a number of armoured personnel carriers for possible use by the United Nations peace-keeping operation in Rwanda mandated by Security Council resolutions 918 (1994) and 925 (1994), assuming that they will meet the United Nations operational requirements and that mutually satisfactory terms for their use will be negotiated. Discussions with the Secretariat on practical and logistical issues in this regard are under way. In addition, South Africa will join the international community in its humanitarian assistance effort. We recently sent a technical team to Kenya and Tanzania to conduct a needs assessment in consultation with the relevant United Nations agencies. In collaboration with the private sector the South African Government will provide high-energy foodstuffs, water purification tablets, pharmaceuticals and blankets. As we have been advised, our assistance will focus on traumatized children and pregnant women.

As I indicated to the recent meeting of the OAU Council of Ministers in Tunis, South Africa stands ready to cooperate with its neighbours in establishing regional confidence-building mechanisms, such as an Africa Nuclear-Free Zone, and promoting a common security framework in the sub-continent in order to secure lasting peace.

In addition, we are committed to a policy of non-proliferation and arms control which covers all weapons of mass destruction as well as conventional weapons. To implement this policy South Africa is in the process of taking numerous substantive steps. We are a State Party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention, and we have played an active role in the negotiations of the United Nations Group of Experts, which was established in consultation with the OAU, for the drafting of such a Treaty.

The people of South Africa salute the Special Committee against Apartheid as well as the Centre Against Apartheid and all other United Nations institutions for their consistent efforts and dedication for over three decades. The reward for the United Nations and the international community is the birth of a democratic and free South Africa - and all our people were deeply honoured when so many of you came to Pretoria on 10 May to participate in our joyous inauguration, which also bestowed pride and dignity on all our people. Ambassador Gambari, as in previous years has once again deployed his astute diplomatic skill and guided this Assembly to consensus on the resolution that has just been adopted. We wish to thank the United Nations, Ambassador Gambari and millions of ordinary people from all walks of life who kept their promise and walked the last mile, hand in hand, with all the people of South Africa.

Today also witnesses the termination of the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa. Since 1965 the Trust Fund has contributed uniquely to the elimination of apartheid by rendering legal, educational and humanitarian relief assistance to the victims of apartheid. On behalf of the recipients of this assistance, we extend our deep gratitude for the generosity of the donor countries that supported the Fund over all these years.

We welcome the decision of the Committee of Trustees to transfer the balance of the Trust Fund to the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa. As the Assembly is aware, education is an integral element of my Government's Reconstruction and Development Programme. We trust that generous support for the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa will continue.

Mr. President, allow me also to say how grateful we are that you have generously authorized the transfer to South Africa of the Art against Apartheid Collection. An important and poignant piece of our history will thus be going home, where it belongs. The Collection has toured the world as an effective and dignified protest against apartheid, and I know our people will welcome the prospect of caring for it in the future so that we may teach our children and the generations to come about the chapter of our history that we are bringing to a close today.

South Africa and its people are also indebted to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who extended his goodwill offices to our leadership at the most crucial phase of our transition. Under his leadership, you, the Members of our Organization, stood by us at the most trying period of persistent violence hindering the negotiating process. In the end, you were there, represented by the United Nations observers, when millions of South Africans patiently stood in line to vote for the first time in their lives. The tireless efforts of the Special Representative for South Africa, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, supported in such an able manner by Ms. Angela King, must be recognized and South Africa's appreciation appropriately recorded. We also extend our deepest gratitude to the observers dispatched by the Organization of African Unity, the European Union and the Commonwealth. All of you were there to share our excitement and to witness our liberation.

Since our first fully democratic elections at the end of April a remarkable tranquillity has come to South Africa, and citizens from all walks of life, from all communities, have banded together in a shared effort to make our fledgling democracy the success that they all want it to be. Former political opponents have closed ranks and joined hands because, at heart, they support the new Government's desire to create a better life for all.

Business confidence is growing; the crippling drought appears finally to have broken; and we have the prospect of seeing our economy grow this year by 3 per cent in real terms. The Government believes that the South African economy, with financial discipline and an attitude of cooperation, does have a good future, once the sacrifices we have to make now in terms of our Reconstruction and Development Programme begin to bear fruit. We accordingly welcome, and are encouraged by, the current discussions in various anti-apartheid organizations on transforming themselves into long-term support agencies to promote development in our region. This is the kind of cooperative approach to the problems of development which, I believe, can go a long way towards realizing the objectives which we all share for the people of southern Africa.

Having for decades occupied so much of the time and energy of the General Assembly, South Africa now wishes to say to the world that we want to be a force for good. We look forward to participating fully as a Member of the United Nations, and as we close one chapter in the history both of our nation and of the United Nations, we welcome the prospect of a new one, in which my country and the nations which compose the United Nations work together in the interests of all who share our world.

The President: Before calling on the next speaker, may I appeal to delegations to limit their statements to five minutes so that we may be able to listen to the very great number of representatives who wish to speak today. I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, Mr. Mohamed-Salah Dembri.

Mr. Dembri (Algeria) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: I should like at the outset to express my deepest condolences to Colombia on the losses caused by the terrible earthquake suffered by that country.

Twenty years ago, in 1974, the international community's condemnation of the South African Government's policy of apartheid was marked in this Hall by a major development, with the decision by the President of the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly to interpret the rejection of the credentials of the South African delegation as involving the suspension of South Africa's participation in the work of this lofty universal forum. This unprecedented expression of the will of the overwhelming majority of the international community will go down in history as a high point in the United Nations commitment to the people of South Africa in their struggle for the eradication of apartheid and for the establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. It will remain for all posterity the symbolic and healthy expression of the universal

conscience, demonstrating that the protection of the human being, in a diversity of races, at all times and places, must guide our search for a redeeming and responsible humanism.

Through the work of individuals and States which thus contributed to placing the General Assembly in the forefront of the struggle against apartheid, the United Nations demonstrated that the emancipation movement of the South African people against racial oppression was born of the truth of just causes. In this way, the Organization reified the purposes and principles of the Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It also allowed the reconciliation of the groups making up the South African people and the welcome for the new South Africa into the African family. Its admission to the comity of nations, which we are celebrating today with the legitimate sense of having fulfilled a duty, is the most striking outcome.

Algeria feels honoured to participate in the welcome extended to the delegation of the Republic of South Africa, led by His Excellency Mr. Alfred Nzo, Minister for Foreign Affairs. We also wish to welcome, in addition to the return of the new South Africa to the General Assembly of the United Nations, the admission of that fraternal and friendly country to the Organization of African Unity and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, two frameworks for solidarity and action which lent constant and vigorous support to the struggle of the South African people. I wish to assure the delegation of South Africa of Algeria's fullest cooperation in the service of our common causes.

Today, as we mark the end of the mission of the Special Committee against Apartheid, of which Algeria has the honour and privilege to be a member, Algeria congratulates all those States which dedicated themselves to that body, as well as fraternal Nigeria, which provided the Committee with consistent and committed chairmanship in the person of several eminent sons of Nigeria, including Mr. Ibrahim Gambari.

By approving today the credentials of the delegation of the Republic of South Africa and by dissolving the Special Committee against Apartheid, the United Nations is acknowledging the results of a long national liberation struggle and of a pluralist electoral process based on the will of the people of South Africa. Its exemplary importance will be remembered.

By vocation and by choice, at a very early date Algeria resolutely took its place at the side of the South African people and the African National Congress, which mobilized its energies and guided its struggle. President Nelson Mandela and many of his companions were welcomed in training camps of the Algerian National Liberation Army, thus making human friendship the common currency of our two countries, a friendship which has grown stronger over the years. In 1974, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, as President of the General Assembly, assumed the historic responsibility of pronouncing the political verdict which gave to the people of South Africa as a whole the authority to choose its legitimate representatives. In 1994 it was a former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, who, as Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, coordinated the work of the international observers of the electoral process that culminated in the emergence of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. The Assembly will therefore understand Algeria's pleasure at participating in this milestone of international life, which arises out of the logic of history.

In addition to its great significance as a major event in the historic journey of the South African people, the African continent and the international community as a whole, the arrival of the new South Africa in the United Nations, as an active partner and an influential voice, is the fulfilment of an expectation. South Africa's wealth of experience, its leaders' sense of responsibility, the genius of its people and the hopes inherent in its potential and capacities all contribute to the dynamic role which this great African country is by nature prepared to assume in order to make further progress towards the realization of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

The movement to achieve decolonization, whose completion globally is expected by the United Nations before the end of this century, should gain from the victory of the South African people renewed legitimacy and new momentum, which will give the fullest expression to the principle of the equality of peoples and their right to self-determination. The United Nations must then actively seek an international order of shared peace and prosperity, with the faith and determination needed to promote humanity's progress on the road to the solidarity that is essential for our future.

The President: I now call on the Honourable Dato'Syed Hamid Albar, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Malaysia.

Mr. Dato'Syed Hamid Albar (Malaysia): I am pleased to see you, Sir, preside over these historic meetings.

May I also join you in conveying our deep condolences to the Government and people of Colombia at this time of tragedy.

I also wish to take this opportunity to extend my warmest welcome to His Excellency Mr. Alfred Nzo, the Foreign Minister of South Africa, when, on this historic occasion, the Assembly meets to adopt a resolution to welcome the return of South Africa to the family of nations.

It has taken more than two decades for us to be able to reintegrate South Africa into the international community. This has been made possible by various positive developments within South Africa, including the first democratic and non-racial elections and the subsequent establishment of a united, democratic, non-racial Government on 10 May 1994, under the able leadership of President Nelson Mandela. We, a community of nations, should extend our warmest congratulations on the achievement of the leaders of South Africa and its people in making the peaceful transition a reality. We observe with admiration the role played by President Mandela and Vice-President de Klerk. My delegation welcomes these positive developments and the role played by the two leaders in closing the chapter on apartheid in South Africa.

The elimination of apartheid is a victory for the South African people, who have demonstrated their determination despite severe odds to create a peaceful, non-racial and democratic South Africa. At the same time, the international community, including the United Nations, can take pride and satisfaction in the positive contributions it has made to bringing apartheid to a peaceful end.

Malaysia is proud to have been involved in this process. Consistent with our deep aversion to and abhorrence of, apartheid, we worked actively within and outside the United Nations in the relentless struggle to dismantle apartheid. In fact, Malaysia was one of the first countries to seek the expulsion of South Africa from multilateral organizations for its policy and practice of apartheid. We have consistently taken a principled position against apartheid, which this Assembly deemed a crime against humanity. Malaysia continues to remain firmly opposed to all forms of discrimination.

Earlier in our deliberations today, we adopted a formal decision to terminate the Special Committee against Apartheid, while taking into account its role and achievement in the global effort to eradicate apartheid. The hard work, dedication and achievement of the Special Committee will no doubt occupy a place of honour and importance in the annals of the history of the United Nations - indeed, of the world. It helped galvanize the international community and played an effective role in the global efforts against apartheid. Indeed, we can unanimously acclaim the fact that this Committee has fulfilled its mandate in accordance with the provisions of relevant General Assembly resolutions, in particular, resolution 1761 (XVII) of 6 November 1962 and resolution 2671 (XXV) of 8 December 1970.

It is timely for me at this juncture to extend my delegation's deep appreciation to the Chairman of the Special Committee, His Excellency Mr. Ibrahim Gambari of Nigeria for his leadership and guidance, which enabled the Committee to conclude its work successfully. All those within the Secretariat, as well as outside, who have contributed to the work of this Committee and the struggle against apartheid should also be commended.

While we acknowledge the fundamental changes taking place in South Africa, we should not forget the challenging tasks that lie ahead as the country begins to face a long and arduous process of national reconstruction and development. South Africa will now leave behind its legacies of apartheid and move forward towards the economic well-being of its multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural society. In this regard, we share the view expressed by the Special Committee against Apartheid in its report that:

> "The socio-economic disparities caused by apartheid need to be urgently addressed to ensure the stable and peaceful development of post-apartheid South Africa and, in this respect, assistance from the international community will be vital." *(A/48/22/Add.1, para. 204)*

The international community must respond positively to the call by President Mandela during his inaugural ceremony, when he stated:

"We trust you will continue to stand by us as we tackle the challenges of building peace, prosperity, non-sexism, non-racialism and democracy."

At this critical stage in the history of the new South Africa, the international community should spare no effort to be supportive of the Government and people of South Africa. In this regard, I would like to reiterate my Government's firm support for and friendship with the new Government of South Africa. Malaysia always believed that the struggle against apartheid would succeed. We had historical links with the liberation movements in South Africa, helping them within our means. We stand ready to continue to work closely with the Government and people of South Africa in their national endeavour towards the reconstruction and development of their country.

We concur with the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Committee against Apartheid in document A/48/22/Add.1. We support the recommendation that the General Assembly appoint a high-level coordinator for all United Nations development activities in South Africa for the next five years. The proposal to establish an informal group of friends of South Africa in the General Assembly merits serious consideration. Given the changes that have taken place in South Africa, it is important for us to review and define, in close consultation with the South African Government, the future role of the United Nations in that country.

While the continuing support of the international community is undoubtedly vital in the process of reconstruction, we share the view articulated by President Mandela in his inauguration speech that it is timely for all South Africans to heal the wounds and to bridge the chasms. The dawn of a new era requires all South Africans to work together. The close of the chapter of apartheid in South Africa in no way reflects the demise of apartheid in some other parts of the world. The heinous policy and practice of "ethnic" cleansing in Bosnia and Herzegovina remain a blot on the conscience of the international community. We must all reaffirm our deep commitment to the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and to eradicating apartheid in all its forms.

The President: I should like to inform Members that the remaining speakers scheduled for this morning will be heard first this afternoon. I again appeal for brief statements, because we have a very long list of speakers, and we only have today at our disposal.

I should also like to remind delegates that at its 75th meeting, held on 10 December 1993, the Assembly, by adopting resolution 48/46, decided to amend the title of agenda item 117 by deleting the words "and efforts to eliminate colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination in southern Africa". The title of the item now reads "Activities of those foreign economic and other interests which impede the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in Territories under colonial domination".

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

United Nations

A/48/PV.96

General Assembly

Forty-eighth Session

Official Records

96th Meeting
Thursday, 23 June 1994, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Insanally . . . . . Guyana

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

Agenda item 38 ***(continued)***

Elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa

(a) Report of the Special Committee Against Apartheid (A/48/22/Add.1)

(b) Report of the Secretary-General (A/48/523/Add.1)

(c) Draft resolutions (A/48/L.58, A/48/L.59)

Mr. Wisnumurti (Indonesia): On behalf of the non-aligned countries, my delegation wishes first of all to express our profound sympathy with the Government and the people of Colombia in the wake of the massive human suffering and destruction visited upon them by the recent earthquake. Our condolences go to the members of the bereaved families.

It is a distinct honour and privilege for me to speak on behalf of the non-aligned countries on agenda item 38, "Elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa". This meeting is particularly timely and auspicious, as it provides a unique opportunity to celebrate a new chapter in South Africa's history, namely, the end of apartheid and racial discrimination and the birth of a non-racial and democratic nation.

It is to be recalled that the Asian-African conference held in Bandung in 1955 was the first international forum to accord recognition to the liberation movements in South Africa. In subsequent years, it became a source of constant inspiration and guide to joint action for removing the scourge of apartheid. It found further expression in 1961 when the Non-Aligned Movement was born and, in unmistakable terms pronounced itself against racism.

Thus, in expressing its strong indignation at the racist Pretoria regime's acts of repression against the people of South Africa, various declarations and communiques issued by the Movement have resoundingly reaffirmed the eradication of apartheid as one of the most urgent tasks for the international community. They also underscored the Movement's solidarity with and unconditional support for the struggle waged by the oppressed people of South Africa for a democratic, non-racial and unitary State.

The Movement has throughout the years unequivocally supported all measures directed towards the eradication of apartheid. In this connection, the Movement has consistently maintained a policy of not establishing diplomatic relations with the Pretoria regime and has always supported the call for the imposition of comprehensive mandatory sanctions by the Security Council. It has also strictly complied with all other boycotts and embargoes, which undoubtedly have had a salutary effect in bringing an end to the indignities and human degradation that the people of South Africa endured for so long.

94-85805 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum. When the result of a recorded and/or roll-call vote is followed by an asterisk, see annex to the record.

The Non-Aligned Movement recalls the role played by the United Nations over the past four decades to restore fundamental rights to the people of South Africa. Beyond doubt, the consideration of this question has had a positive impact in further mobilizing world opinion for the cause of racial equality and justice. It was this forum that also set the guiding principles for the elimination of apartheid. The Non-Aligned Movement is therefore greatly indebted to the Organization for its pivotal role in bringing about the democratic transformation of South Africa. In this connection, the Movement wishes to express its deep appreciation to the Special Committee against Apartheid, under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari of Nigeria, for its valuable contributions to the struggle against apartheid.

The non-aligned countries commend the people of South Africa across the political spectrum for having successfully made their country's first multiracial elections a reality, thereby closing the dark chapter of apartheid. This is truly a victory for all those who devoted their lives to the cause of freedom and racial equality. They also commend South Africa's remarkable political transformation with the promulgation of an Interim Constitution and the establishment of the Government of National Unity, which was rendered possible largely because of the solemn commitment of their leaders to cooperation, conciliation and compromise.

The non-aligned countries warmly welcome resolution 48/258 A, just adopted by the Assembly, which signifies the successful conclusion of the mandate entrusted to the Special Committee against Apartheid. It will also remove from the Assembly's agenda the item entitled "Elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa". Most importantly, it will facilitate the country's long-awaited restoration of membership in the community of nations, especially in the General Assembly of the United Nations.

After a long isolation from the international community, the people of South Africa can now look forward to the future with hope and optimism. In this connection, the non-aligned countries extend their unstinting support to the new South African Government in its efforts to accomplish the lofty goal of economic development and reconstruction. It is a source of immense satisfaction that the Eleventh Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement recently held in Cairo decided to admit South Africa as the 111th member of the Movement.

We remain confident that, under the dedicated and dynamic leadership of President Nelson Mandela, South Africa will achieve peace, progress and prosperity.

Mr. Yoo (Republic of Korea): At the outset, let me join the representative of Indonesia in extending sincere condolences to the people of Colombia for the enormous human and property losses and suffering they have sustained.

It is my great pleasure and privilege to be given this opportunity to speak on the United Nations achievement in the elimination of apartheid and the establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. This morning, my delegation was extremely pleased to see Mr. Alfred Nzo, Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa, resume the South African seat in this Hall after an absence of 20 years and deliver a most inspiring statement. While welcoming South Africa back, the Republic of Korea looks forward to a most active role and an important contribution of South Africa to the future work of the United Nations.

My delegation would like to pay tribute to the Special Committee against Apartheid for fulfilling its historic mandate, which spanned several decades, with unfaltering purpose and for crowning its work with success. Since its establishment 32 years ago, the Special Committee has played a pivotal role in bringing about the abolition of apartheid. My delegation would also like to congratulate Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Permanent Representative of Nigeria, for his most capable service as Chairman of the Special Committee. As a man of philosophy, conviction and an impressive sense of professionalism, Mr. Gambari successfully steered the Committee with practical tact and tireless effort during its most difficult and delicate period. Indeed, many of the goals of the Committee could not have been realized without his important contributions. The ceaseless and continuing perseverance and role of the Secretary-General of the United Nations also deserve the deep appreciation of the entire international community.

This past April, we witnessed the termination of apartheid and with it the successful establishment of a new non-racial and democratic South Africa. The remarkable progress we are seeing today is the result of the exceptional vision, courage and pragmatism of the current leaders of South Africa, President Mandela and Executive Deputy President de Klerk, the ardent support of the international community and the devotion and sacrifice of countless, unrecognized South Africans who

helped to lay the foundations of peace and reconciliation in their country.

At this threshold of a new era of a non-racial and democratic South Africa, I look forward to the contribution of all of us together in helping the people of South Africa overcome any adversity and challenge they may face in the future. In particular, the international community should provide assistance to rectify the severe socio-economic disparities that have resulted from apartheid over the past three decades. I stand assured in knowing that the United Nations, which has been closely involved in the affairs of South Africa, will continue to provide valuable assistance to the new South Africa as it moves further towards progress and prosperity in the years to come.

Although it was not a member of the Special Committee against Apartheid, the Republic of Korea, as a witness to this phenomenal historical achievement, shares the collective sense of joy and exhilaration of the international community. At the same time, the Republic of Korea reaffirms its full support for and active participation in the efforts of the Government and the people of South Africa to effect a smooth and constructive transition towards greater democracy and prosperity.

Ms. Mathurin Mair (Jamaica): On this historic occasion, it is a great honour and privilege for my delegation to speak on behalf of the States Members of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Today's meetings of the General Assembly are a signal victory for the fundamental principle on which the United Nations was founded, namely,

> "respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion".

The item before us today is truly a remarkable vindication of that principle. For today we welcome the return of the delegation of South Africa to the General Assembly. We welcome a South Africa which has turned its back on apartheid, a South Africa which is now united, democratic and non-racial.

For this transformation, the international community owes a great debt of gratitude to the Special Committee against Apartheid which, 32 years ago, received its mandate from the General Assembly to monitor South Africa's policies of apartheid. That campaign, in which the Committee has been a central actor, has been most appropriately described by President Nelson Mandela as "the most important human rights crusade of the post-cold war era".

Today we received the Committee's final report - an excellent, comprehensive report for which we are grateful to the Rapporteur. The United Nations can be justly proud of the role the Committee has played in sustaining the vigilance and activism of the international community and providing critical support to the anti-apartheid forces in South Africa.

Having successfully carried out its mandate, the Committee has now concluded its work. We thank and congratulate the Chairman, Ambassador Gambari, for his outstanding leadership, and all the members of the Committee, past and present, for their dedication to the international campaign for racial equality and justice.

Latin America and the Caribbean also wish to acknowledge with deep appreciation the highly professional and dedicated work of the staff of the United Nations Centre against Apartheid, which supported the work of the Special Committee, the Commission against Apartheid in Sports and other anti-apartheid bodies. The Centre has closely monitored the situation in South Africa and produced extensive documentation which has been invaluable in forming our analysis of the situation in South Africa. So we are grateful to the Centre for so admirably fulfilling its mission.

The United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA) has had a critical responsibility for monitoring the transitional process preparatory to major electoral reform. UNOMSA has also satisfactorily fulfilled its mandate, and our region joins others in commending it for its contribution at a particularly sensitive and challenging phase of political and constitutional reform. May I add a special personal note of pride and appreciation for the leadership of my countrywoman, Miss Angela King, who for several months carried the responsibility for that Observer Mission in South Africa.

But above all, it is the men, women and children of South Africa who most deserve our congratulations and, indeed, our admiration for the difficult, dangerous and too often violent journey which they have travelled in the past few decades and which they have survived. From this distance, it is not easy to comprehend the cost in human suffering which the regime of apartheid imposed on a whole nation. We therefore cannot commend too

highly the heroism and determination of the people of South Africa who, against such massive obstacles, ultimately chose the path of the negotiating table and the ballot box.

Today, in that context, we pay special tribute to the vision and courage of President Nelson Mandela and Second Deputy F. W. de Klerk, under whose leadership the historic events of the last five years have unfolded.

As the Governments and the peoples of the region of Latin America and the Caribbean extend their sincere congratulations to the South African delegation on its resumption of its seat in this Hall, so also do we pledge our heartfelt friendship and our cooperation.

We are only too acutely aware of the fact that this new journey on which the people of South Africa are now embarking will not be an easy one. The report of the Special Committee documents this reality. Apartheid's legacy of impoverishment, of social and economic disparities, cannot be addressed in the short term. It will require not only the determination, perseverance, cooperation and patience of all South Africans in order to meet the many challenges facing the nation; it will clearly require as well the critical, generous support of the international community.

In this context, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the valuable assistance given to the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa by the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa and to endorse the appeal contained in resolution 48/258 B for Member States to offer financial and material support to the reconstruction and development efforts in South Africa. The commitment of the Latin American and Caribbean region to respond to this appeal, to support and assist the growth and development of a new South Africa is as strong as was our commitment to the anti-apartheid cause of past decades. And here we recall with pride our regional initiative for one of the most effective instruments in the anti-apartheid struggle, namely, the sports sanctions against South Africa as expressed in the international Convention against Apartheid in Sports. By the very nature of its target - sports - the Convention became a uniquely visible and dynamic instrument for sensitizing, for galvanizing world opinion - male, female, young or old. Eighteen Member States of Latin America and the Caribbean were among the first signatories to that Convention.

The architect of that brilliant strategy was Jamaica's former Prime Minister, The Honourable Michael Manley, who also ensured that the English-speaking Commonwealth of nations adopted similar sports boycotts which, as is well known, proved to be enormously effective in mobilizing anti-apartheid opinion. It might also be mentioned that former Prime Minister Manley more recently led the Commonwealth Observer Group which monitored the elections in South Africa.

The Rio Group of Latin America and the Caribbean, in its declaration of March of this year, reaffirmed the region's solidarity with, and continuing assistance to, democratic South Africa. Such assistance, whether through bilateral or multilateral cooperation, or through coordination with United Nations agencies, is high on the national and the regional agenda of Latin American and Caribbean Member States.

The majority of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have had a long tradition of multiple racial, ethnic and cultural identities. Increasingly, this experience challenges us to draw on this tradition and to see it not so much as a phenomenon of differences but rather as one of diversity in which each separate element contains a positive element for enriching the total entity and for enriching our societies. Latin America and the Caribbean look forward to sharing such potentially rewarding experiences with the Member of the United Nations which has returned anew, for the mutual strengthening of our family of nations.

Mr. Minoves-Triquell (Andorra): I have the double honour of addressing the General Assembly on this historic occasion first in my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States and afterwards in my national capacity.

As Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States it is my pleasure to congratulate the people of South Africa warmly on the peaceful political developments that have led to the elimination of apartheid and the establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa ready to resume its seat at the United Nations among the sovereign States of the world. I also want to thank the Special Committee against Apartheid for the dedicated work it has done since its creation by the General Assembly on 6 November 1962.

As representative of the Principality of Andorra, the most recent addition to the United Nations, I am proud to convey the sincere wishes of my Government, and particularly those of Prime Minister Oscar Ribas Reig

and those of Foreign Minister Marc Vila Amigó, for abundant peace and prosperity in the new South Africa.

The people of Andorra also share in the joy of all members of this august Assembly in welcoming South Africa as an active participant in the work of the Organization. Less than a year after we sat in this forum for the first time, we understand well the emotions that the citizens of South Africa must now be experiencing as their country is finally able to collaborate fully in upholding the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Allow me on this happy occasion to pay a tribute to the leader whose heroic struggle has inspired generations of South Africans: President Nelson Mandela. The spirit of a people sometimes manifests itself in its leaders. President Mandela's peaceful tenacity in the midst of adversity, his love of justice and his humanity reveal him as one of this century's great leaders and as an exceptional human being.

Last year, when he visited the United Nations, Mr. Mandela personally congratulated my country on its entry to the Organization. It is now the turn of the Principality of Andorra to welcome South Africa.

Mr. Olhaye (Djibouti): It is not easy to convey the profound feelings of joy and the sense of a job well done that accompany the return to our family of our brothers and sisters from South Africa. Gone is the hateful regime of apartheid, which symbolized that country's official policy and attitude for so long: so stunning an example of racial discrimination and oppression as to defy comprehension.

There have been many players in the struggle against apartheid over the years, but certainly none are more deserving of praise and recognition than the majority people of South Africa themselves. Refusing to accept the status of inferiority and degradation forced upon them, they organized themselves early on to wage a long struggle by all necessary means against their exclusion from the political process through the denial of the right to vote, through the infamous pass laws, and through being forced to live on "native reserves". The educationally lost generation of youth, as described in the report of the Special Committee against Apartheid, reminds us that the fight was waged all the way down to the school children, who must have learned well the first lesson of life: dignity and self-respect.

Arguably, the signal achievement of the South African people may have been its recognition that any effective struggle needs to be organized and properly led. In their wisdom, they rallied behind the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and its torch bearer, President Nelson Mandela, who invariably surrounded himself with many loyal and capable leaders.

Fortunately, the struggle in South Africa coincided with liberation struggles throughout the continent and throughout the world. This enabled South Africa's front-line neighbours to lead the way for many of us to assist the fight and provide refuge and support to opposition groups, principally, of course, the African National Congress of South Africa. Thanks to this, along with the efforts of the international community, represented by numerous Governments, non-governmental organizations and individuals, the focus on apartheid became a crescendo of condemnation, spotlighted by the conscience of the world.

In that respect, the United Nations has a long history, through its many resolutions, embargoes, debates, studies, funds and committees. We are immensely indebted to Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari, my colleague from Nigeria, and his Special Committee against Apartheid, whose mandate has been achieved and whose final report is before us, for their exemplary job in consistently reminding, updating and galvanizing the world with respect to the situation in South Africa. The United Nations Trust Fund, for its part, was able to funnel considerable financial support to victims of apartheid - funds voluntarily contributed by many donors.

We are profoundly grateful for the deep and unfailing commitment of the Secretary-General and his dedicated Special Representative, and of the entire staff of the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA) to the successful transition of South Africa to democracy and freedom, a goal set by the Organization decades ago.

As the pages of the report of the Special Committee against Apartheid reveal, South Africa has properly returned to world-wide grace. Recognition has come, of course, from the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States, the Commonwealth, the European Union, the Non-Aligned Movement, all elements of the United Nations system, and others.

With the endorsement of the recommendations of the Credentials Committee of the General Assembly, South

Africa is once again a full member of this august Assembly.

One benefit of all of this for South Africa will be its ability to focus on the needs of the vast majority of its citizens, who have so long been neglected. Addressing the distortions caused by apartheid can now receive the full attention and energies of the Government, augmented by assistance from the world community and the international economy.

No doubt the euphoria of these heady days will recede as the difficult jobs of government and politics begin. Certainly, the patience, leadership, realism and determination of President Mandela will be of great benefit to South Africa during this period and will be a much-needed anchor for the political process. We can only urge all South Africans in the strongest terms to work together to complete the task of restructuring South Africa to put it on the path of achieving its undoubted greatness. South Africa cannot fail to have seen that all Africa and, indeed, the world, shares in its joy.

There will perhaps be a tendency for us to expect too much from South Africa, so strong is the need for direction in Africa. We congratulate the people of South Africa and thank them for such a splendid example of determination and strength. In so many ways, Africa and the world are better places.

Ms. da Cruz (Angola): It is with great pleasure that my delegation is intervening in this meeting devoted to the consideration of the last report of the Special Committee against Apartheid. Angola welcomes the return of South Africa to the General Assembly, and warmly congratulates its delegation, led by the Foreign Minister, Mr. Alfred Nzo.

The sanctions imposed on and resolutions adopted against South Africa pursuant to Chapter VII of the Charter and recently lifted by the United Nations played a very important role in the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa.

My delegation congratulates the selfless work carried out by the Special Committee against Apartheid, and pays a well-deserved tribute to all the sons of Africa and all others who gave their lives so that the abolition of apartheid might become a reality and the mandate of the Committee terminated, as it has today.

I also congratulate Mr. Ibrahim Gambari for his selfless work in the name of Africa.

The struggle against the abhorrent apartheid system was long and painful and caused untold devastation to property, as well as human misery, not only in South Africa itself but also in the neighbouring countries of southern Africa. The apartheid system lasted 40 years. Nelson Mandela was incarcerated for 27 years in Robben Island prison.

Angola, along with the other front-line States, was one of the main victims of the apartheid system because of support for the African National Congress (ANC) and other democratic forces. Their contribution in the struggle against apartheid was assisted by the beloved sons of the Cuban people who, at their side, accelerated the liquidation of apartheid.

Since the first days of its independence, the Government of Angola has devoted itself in particular to the struggle for the liberation of the whole continent. It is for this reason that the racist regime of South Africa at the time did not hesitate to attack by all means Angola's sovereignty, as well as its infrastructure. We paid the price in our dead, our wounded and our mutilated, and humanity cannot ignore that.

Angola joins the international community in warmly congratulating the Government and the people of South Africa for the establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa with the conclusion of the election process that began on 27 April 1994.

We joyfully congratulate President Nelson Mandela for his fair and timely election as Head of State of the Republic of South Africa on 10 May 1994. His election potently symbolized his success as a freedom fighter.

We are certain that the changes that have occurred in South Africa will contribute to the consolidation of democracy, peace and tranquility, which the international community has long awaited.

Finally, in the view of my delegation, it would be immoral and incorrect for the United Nations to make any demand of the new democratic South African Government regarding the payment of arrears in contributions unpaid by the former Government.

Mr. Mwaungulu (Malawi): The Malawi delegation takes this opportunity to convey the good wishes and

felicitations of the Government and the people of Malawi to the Government and the people of South Africa on this historic day, when the delegation of South Africa to the General Assembly at its resumed forty-eighth session, led by its Foreign Minister, Mr. Alfred Nzo, himself a great and historic figure in the struggle for liberation in South Africa, legitimacy resumes its seat with pomp and majesty.

The South African delegation to the General Assembly at its resumed forty-eighth session, as seated, represents a popularly elected majority Government of National Unity under the leadership of President Nelson Mandela. President Mandela is the epitome of the struggle for liberation in South Africa. His name alone decisively mobilized the struggle to ever greater and greater heights worldwide. The struggle against apartheid literally consumed the best of South Africa's sons and daughters across the racial divide, and regardless of age.

It was a struggle against the most monstrous and demonic institutionalized system of racism that has ever been devised on this planet. The scale and enormity of the injustice of apartheid were difficult to comprehend. But apartheid came to an ignoble end after the first-ever non-racial free, fair and very successful general election from 27 to 29 April 1994. The road to the demise of apartheid was complex. It was long, rough, extremely violent and most protracted. That is why we are relieved and joyous to be here on this historic day.

The Malawi delegation joins all other delegations in this august Assembly to applaud - nay, to rejoice, celebrate and see with our own eyes - the delegation of South Africa resuming its seat in this body, which fought so hard for South Africa's redemption from evil.

It is only 58 days since the general elections in South Africa. Predictably, the African National Congress emerged the majority party. It is only 38 days since President Nelson Mandela was installed as the first black African Head of State, after 300 years of sustained white minority rule, which was sometimes extremely brutal, as demonstrated by the system of apartheid.

It is a rare moment in the history of modern Governments to see, in South Africa, the establishment of a uniquely conciliatory and inclusive Government of National Unity. This is the miracle of President Mandela. Indeed, this kind of achievement could only have been crafted from inside South Africa by South Africans themselves. Mr. Frederick de Klerk, the former President of the minority white regime, deserves no less praise for the role he played in this outcome, and also in the process as a whole.

The Special Committee against Apartheid, established by the General Assembly in 1962 under resolution 1761 (XVII), and augmented by subsequent General Assembly resolution in 1970 and 1989, has been the focal point in the United Nations system in the sustained and unwavering fight against apartheid and its destructive consequences. The Special Committee has acquitted itself well and merits all the accolades. Mr. Gambari must be congratulated for his effective leadership in the crucial stages of the work of the Special Committee. Hence, in my delegation's view, it would not be asking too much to call on the General Assembly to approve the conspicuous display of a plaque, or some kind of memorial, to immortalize the achievements of the Special Committee.

The mobilizing of opposition against apartheid was complex and called for commitment and concerted attacks on all fronts. It should not be forgotten that apartheid existed as long as it did because it had powerful friends and backers'. However, the tide of history was against it. There is no case in history of systematic oppression sustaining itself and succeeding. In every case, its fall has been a certainty. Mandela was the light at the end of that dark tunnel which apartheid had dug - and kept digging - for itself.

The report of the Special Committee against Apartheid gives a clear summary of the huge challenges South Africa faces as its Government grapples to meet, in the immediate and medium-term, the myriad interlocking demands and expectations of its people, mainly the deprives majority black people. My delegation takes this opportunity to urge the international community to support tangibly the new South African Government's reconstruction and development programme. Freedom and democratization in themselves cannot succeed until the ordinary people are given concrete opportunities for change, are able to see changes which touch them directly and physically and also in their attitudes, changes that affect the whole spectrum of socio-economic issues. This is the way international finance must help South Africa heal the deep wounds of apartheid.

The United Nations has a continuing major role to play in South Africa. In this respect my delegation fully supports the recommendation by the Special Committee to appoint, in consultation with the South African

Government, a high-level United Nations coordinator. If such a person is indeed appointed, one of his or her tasks must be in the area of civic education, to formulate with the South African Government of National Unity an implementable programme of action to combat the invidious culture of apartheid. Racism in South Africa predates apartheid. It will take time, but determined and deliberate efforts must be taken now for the present and future good of the black and white man in South Africa and in southern Africa as a whole. This will help seal for posterity the achievement of the international community in all its descriptions and the United Nations to eliminate apartheid and establish a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

Malawi, too, held successful multiparty elections, almost three weeks after the general elections in South Africa. The former President, Mr. H. Kamuzu Banda, and his Malawi Congress Party were defeated. Mr. Banda did not hesitate to concede defeat and to facilitate the transfer of power to the new State President, His Excellency Mr. Bakili Muluzi, of the United Democratic Front. The success of the electoral process and democratic transition in Malawi in a small but historically significant way crowns the universally acknowledged success of the general elections in South Africa and the establishment in that country of a democratic multiracial Government of National Unity. This augurs well for southern Africa.

It is in this spirit of hope and expectation that my State President, his Government and the people of Malawi wish Mozambique the same successful outcome in the conduct of its forthcoming general elections; and also wish Angola a speedy resolution of the intractable problems in the negotiations currently in progress in Zambia. This is the only way that the Southern African Development Community (SADC), with South Africa a likely member, can harness the tremendous resources in the region for the benefit of the more than 100 million people who live in the region.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The European Union warmly welcomes the return of South Africa to the international community as represented in the General Assembly of the United Nations. The European Union wishes on this occasion also to congratulate wholeheartedly the people of South Africa and its leaders on bringing apartheid to an end and on establishing a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

The European Union wishes also to pay tribute to all those within the United Nations, the non-governmental organizations and the international community as a whole whose continued efforts and determined actions helped to bring about the elimination of apartheid.

The European Union commends the Secretary-General for the successful implementation of the mandates entrusted to him by Security Council resolutions 765 (1992), 772 (1992), 894 (1994) and 919 (1994), as well as, through the efforts of his Special Representative, the provisions of General Assembly resolution 48/159 A relating to the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA). We also commend the Organization of African Unity and the Commonwealth for their important contributions, *inter alia*, through their Observer Missions, to the process of the peaceful transition of South Africa to a democratic country with equal rights for all its citizens.

The European Union has welcomed the first non-racial and democratic constitution of South Africa, the holding of the first democratic elections and the establishment of a democratic, non-racial Government of National Unity in South Africa.

We have also expressed our support for the efforts of the Government and the people of South Africa in implementing programmes for the reconstruction and development of their country. In the context of the decision of the Council of the European Union of 19 April 1994, we pledged a package of immediate measures for South Africa. Those measures will focus on important sectors of special interest to South Africa, such as trade, economic cooperation and development cooperation, and will be coupled with the commencement of a political dialogue in order to enhance and consolidate the democratic institutions upon which the new South African society is building its future.

In addition, the European Union has taken the initiative for an important conference to be held in Berlin, Germany, on 5 and 6 September 1994. At this conference the Foreign Ministers of the European Union will meet with the Foreign Minister of South Africa and his colleagues from the Southern African Development Community to discuss the new perspectives of regional economic cooperation and the future cooperation between the countries of southern Africa and the European Union.

The European Union welcomes South Africa back to the General Assembly with its full voting rights. With

regard to the question of arrears, the European Union notes with satisfaction the South African Government's willingness to make its contributions to the United Nations, and the European Union is ready to participate constructively in the discussion of the matter in the United Nations.

The European Union welcomes the resolution which the General Assembly adopted today. Its adoption will lead to the termination of the mandate of the Special Committee against Apartheid, which has been successfully concluded, as well as to the deletion from the provisional agenda of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly of the item entitled "Elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa".

The European Union would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the Special Committee against Apartheid, and in particular to its Chairman, Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari of Nigeria, for their contributions to the developments which have brought us to this historic day.

The European Union encourages the United Nations to make a special effort to assist the new South Africa with the consolidation of democracy and the reconstruction of the country. In this context, we are ready to consider the idea of a high-level coordinator for United Nations development activities in South Africa.

Finally, the European Union is confident that the new Government of South Africa will continue, with the assistance of the international community, its successful efforts to find, through constructive dialogue and peaceful means, the best possible solutions to the problems it encounters.

Mr. Osvald (Sweden): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the five Nordic countries - Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

The democratic elections in South Africa two months ago closed the book on a long and dark chapter in the history not only of South Africa, but of humanity. By its vicious racial policies, the South Africa of yesterday stood out as a unique case. By its own actions, it set itself apart from the international community.

We are assembled here today to celebrate the historic moment when the same international community welcomes the new democratic South Africa to its rightful place in the General Assembly of the United Nations. We are honoured to do this having in our midst the Foreign Minister of South Africa and his delegation, representing the Government of National Unity and Reconciliation.

The Nordic countries congratulate all the people of South Africa on what they have achieved through decades of protest and struggle and through the last few years of hard negotiations. Today South Africa has become a symbol of hope. South Africa has shown that adversaries can become partners, that compromise is possible, even between the most divergent positions, and that there can be a peaceful way to solve even the most longstanding and bitter conflicts. It is the wisdom and true patriotism of South Africans which brought this about.

The United Nations can, however, take pride in its contributions to the democratic change in South Africa. From the outset the United Nations, and not least its Special Committee against Apartheid, stood on the side of the liberation movements and of the victims of the apartheid system. It brought pressure to bear on that system through political repudiation and isolation by calling for a variety of economic sanctions and through the cultural and sports boycott.

From the outset the Nordic countries took an active part in international efforts to bring an end to apartheid. They rigorously applied the sanctions imposed on South Africa by the United Nations. In furtherance of a Nordic Programme of Action against Apartheid, we worked for comprehensive and mandatory international sanctions. In the absence of such international measures, the Nordic countries introduced far-reaching national sanctions.

An equally important element of the Nordic policy was to support the forces opposing apartheid. Long before they gained international prominence, anti-apartheid leaders were already received as regular visitors in our capitals. Over the years substantial economic support was extended to the anti-apartheid movement, to educational assistance, legal aid and other purposes.

As South Africa joins the community of democratic nations, it needs and deserves the continued support of the world. The challenges of the transitional period are plentiful. Millions of black South Africans lack the most basic facilities. They expect that democracy will also bring them what their fellow citizens have long enjoyed: the chance to have a decent life in the country of their birth. But the economic, social, cultural and human

legacy of apartheid will be a heavy one to bear and hard to eradicate.

As South Africa joins the community of democratic nations, the world also counts on the support of a democratic and dynamic South Africa. That country's history and experiences, as well as its human and material potential, place it in a unique position to play an important and valuable role in Africa and internationally, particularly here at the United Nations.

Today is a joyous day for South Africa. It is an equally joyous day for the General Assembly, the United Nations as a whole and the international community at large. The fundamental message of the long and tortuous road South Africa has walked is clear: all oppression will come to an end; freedom will eventually triumph everywhere.

Mr. Botez (Romania): Let me first express the profound compassion of our Government, our people and ourselves, the members of the Romanian Mission to the United Nations, for the innocent victims of the natural disaster that hit Colombia.

It is with deep emotion that we celebrate today the return of South Africa to the family of nations represented in the General Assembly. On behalf of the Romanian Government, it is a privilege for me to welcome in this Hall, and in its rightful seat, the delegation of South Africa, headed by His Excellency Mr. Alfred Nzo, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

This long-awaited moment is the result of one of the most difficult and extraordinary lessons in recent history concerning the restoration of human dignity through democratic means. And let me incidentally mention in this respect how sensitive to such terms as "human dignity" against discriminatory practices, or "democratic means" in achieving social and political goals, are people like me, who spent so many years under communist dictatorship. One can therefore see that, in celebrating this triumph of democracy, we, the people of the post-communist world, have additional reasons indeed to celebrate.

I will not elaborate for too long on this very special occasion about the modest contribution my Government has made to this celebration of decency, a value so often neglected in our world today. Romania hailed and supported, bilaterally and as a member of the international community, all the initiatives and efforts to put an end to the obsolete apartheid policies, to organize the process of non-racial elections and successfully to establish democratic institutions in South Africa. The leaders of all the main political parties of that marvellous country - and especially those of the African National Congress, the National Party and the Inkatha Freedom Party - have found understanding and friendship in their contacts with Romanian leaders.

All the political forces of my country have encouraged the peaceful way of negotiation for the settlement of the complex situation inherited from the past. Like many of us in this Hall, we were all aware that democratic change in South Africa was possible only with the contribution of all political parties representing the whole spectrum of the people of South Africa. Romania has thus normalized its bilateral relations with South Africa following such consultations with virtually all its main political parties. We are confident that all the political forces in South Africa - mainly those which are represented in the Government of National Unity - will demonstrate the same exemplary wisdom and political responsibility in the building of a non-racial, democratic society able to ensure full respect for human rights in accordance with international standards. For democracy means not only governance by the majority, but also the protection of minorities.

Fortunately, we have the privilege of the embodiment of courage and vision in such leaders as Mr. Mandela and Mr. de Klerk. The committee which awarded the Nobel Peace Prize proved that we all share such an unusual privilege.

The international community and the United Nations have played a significant role during this process. For more than three decades the Special Committee against Apartheid, established by the General Assembly, channelled and sustained the determination of the Member States to reach goals often perceived as utopian. The resolution adopted today is also recognition of the successful conclusion of the dynamic work of the members of the Committee, especially in the past few years under the diligent chairmanship of Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari of Nigeria.

What we really celebrate now is a victory against bigotry and intolerance, for racial discrimination is unfortunately not the only form of discrimination. It has been said that if we were to wake up some morning and find everyone with the same colour skin, by noon we would find something else to be prejudiced about. But people who have suffered from one form of prejudice can

learn from this how to escape from other forms of discrimination. We are sure that the same spirit of tolerance and compromise as prevailed in the past will preside over the future of that magnificent country.

We once again welcome South Africa into this forum. We are convinced that the involvement of South Africa, with its important human and natural resources, in the activities of the United Nations will be to the benefit both of our world Organization and of the consolidation of democracy - of course, in South Africa first, but also as an example to be followed in our world of "We the peoples", as our Charter says.

Mr. Hurst (Antigua and Barbuda): Five hundred years ago, beginning in 1492, distant worlds began to collide. One very robust and technologically advanced civilization seemed to have easily overpowered several others. Within a short historical period following the first encounter of 1492 Western Europeans were able to exercise dominance over many of the peoples of the new world.

From the islands of the Caribbean to the plains of North America, from South Africa to the South Pacific, the civilization of Western Europe, carried by its adventurous sons to distant shores, seemed fully capable of erasing all others.

Less than 50 years after Western Europe's first collision with the Caribbean a traffic in human beings was to commence between West Africa and the Americas. The slave trade intensified and expanded over several centuries, as required by an ever greater need for labour in the lands which had been conquered. Noted scholars and statesmen from the Caribbean have argued persuasively in many celebrated writings that theories of racial superiority began to emerge out of the economic relations which slave society created. In South Africa, as in several new-world countries, the ugly theory of race superiority assumed its most virulent form by ultimately dressing itself in legality.

Today, 500 years after the collision of once-distant worlds, and after decades of legally enforced racism, apartheid is dead. The people of Antigua and Barbuda celebrate with the victorious people of South Africa and share their vision of a new, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist State. Our Prime Minister, the Honourable Lester Bryant Bird, has conveyed to the President of South Africa, His Excellency Mr. Nelson Mandela, my people's "warm and heartfelt congratulations on the triumph of the African National Congress at the first non-racial, democratic general elections ever held in South Africa".

The entire world now registers its applause. The role of the United Nations is again firmly established as a platform of the powerless for trumpeting good over evil, justice over wrong, human dignity over degradation.

W. E. B. DuBois, an African-American scholar and freedom-fighter at the turn of this century, wrote that the problem of the twentieth century was the problem of race. As this century draws to a close, colonialism has been largely dismantled, and apartheid is no more. Race has been dethroned as mankind's most contentious problem. The gravest problem of the next century is largely one of economic injustice buttressed by radical nationalism within and among nations. It is compounded by the abuse of our planet's environment.

As we seek to achieve economic justice, sustainable development and an end to wasteful production and consumption patterns which threaten environmental destruction, vulnerable small island States like mine will enlist the support of the Government and the people of South Africa, just as they can assuredly rely on our support.

On behalf of the Government and the people of Antigua and Barbuda, my delegation welcomes the delegation of South Africa back to this forum. My Government fully supports the proposal to forgive the debt to the United Nations incurred by the apartheid Government and therefore gladly joins the consensus resolution before us today. We wish the people and the Government of South Africa all the very best for the future, and I repeat my Prime Minister's pledge of Antigua and Barbuda's utmost cooperation and support.

Mr. Ould Mohamed Mahmoud (Mauritania) *(interpretation from French)*: The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania is happy to take part in this debate devoted to the official return of South Africa to the community of nations by its representation in the General Assembly, the supreme organ of the Organization.

The decision we took this morning is the culmination of a number of measures which have made it possible for the international community to make a substantial contribution to the dismantling of the odious

system of apartheid and to decisively support the reintegration of South Africa in the concert of nations. Thus, after economic sanctions and the arms embargo were lifted on 8 October 1993 and 25 May of this year, respectively, we have now terminated the mandate of the Special Committee against Apartheid.

Among the organs created to contribute to the eradication of apartheid, no other Committee has played as active and determining a role in the efforts of the international community to put an end to this crime against mankind. It is therefore with a feeling of a job well done that the Special Committee against Apartheid on 14 June adopted its final report, wherein it took note of the fact that, with the entry into force of the first democratic and non-racial Constitution and of the organization of the first free and democratic elections in the history of that country on 27 April 1994, apartheid has now disappeared from South Africa.

On this occasion, may I express my wholehearted congratulations to all the members of the Special Committee and, in particular, to its last President - a true militant for decolonization in Africa and the eradication of apartheid in particular - the seasoned diplomat, our colleague and friend, Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, who exerted praiseworthy efforts to secure this new democratic South Africa. He deserves our heartfelt gratitude for the remarkable role he played as head of that important Committee.

We would also like to pay a warm tribute to the Secretary-General for having successfully carried out the tasks entrusted to him by various bodies of the United Nations and, thank all eminent Africans and others who contributed to this historic victory. I also extend our deep condolences to the families of the martyrs of South Africa, particularly the family of our colleague and friend, the late Johny Makatini of the ANC.

This is first and foremost a victory for the South African people which paid a heavy price. It is also a victory for the front-line States, the Organization of African Unity and the international community which, through coercive measures, for decades played an effective role in support of the struggle of all South Africans.

The election of Mr. Nelson Mandela as the first President of a democratic South Africa, on 10 May 1994, was an historic event and a source of great satisfaction for the international community, and for the peoples of Africa in particular. The Islamic Republic of Mauritania, hails this event, which shows that no problem is insurmountable when justice, reason and common sense prevail.

The social and political transition towards a democratic order in South Africa constitutes a solid foundation for peace and stability in South Africa, as well as in southern Africa, which has suffered from wars for so many years. We are convinced that with its full reintegration in the community of nations this new South Africa will play a positive role with regard to the purposes and principles of the Charter, particularly economic and social development, which today is but another name for international peace and security.

The international community contributed to the success of the struggle of the South African people, as well as to the organization of the pluralistic electoral process that crowned this national struggle, and it must now work in concert to consolidate this important victory.

The success of the democratic experience in South Africa will make a specific contribution to the progress of democracy everywhere in the world and will serve as encouragement to the settlement of disputes by peaceful means.

In conclusion, I should like to hail the decision the General Assembly took today to put an end to a painful chapter in the history of the entire African continent by restoring the full participation of South Africa in the General Assembly.

At this time of joy and satisfaction let me finally add that the thoughts of my delegation also go to the Palestinian people whose inalienable rights have now been trampled for almost half a century. May the victory we are celebrating today constitute for all peace- and justice-loving peoples a resolute commitment against all wars and crises affecting our planet. As we near the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization, may this important gain achieved by the international community promote peace, justice and solidarity at the service of the economic and social development of all peoples.

Mr. Somavia (Chile) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: May I begin by expressing the great emotion and satisfaction I feel in taking part in this event in the General Assembly Hall, the political home of the United Nations. What a great joy it is for the international community to welcome in this supreme forum a united,

democratic and non-racial South Africa. This meeting symbolizes progress and faith in mankind and is of far-reaching significance for the tasks of the United Nations.

Allow me briefly to describe a recent personal experience. I am happy to be addressing the Assembly today, but a week ago I represented my country at the Cairo meeting of non-aligned foreign ministers. There I felt the same emotions I am feeling now, inspired by seeing the delegation of South Africa, led by Foreign Minister Nzo, become a part of the Non-Aligned Movement. Thanks to the kind invitation I received from the Organization of African Unity (OAU), I was deeply moved a few days later to see President Mandela, at the head of a multiracial delegation, lead South Africa into membership as the fifty-third member of the OAU.

Today's meeting fits in with that ongoing symbolism. Our entire multilateral system is reacquainting itself with South Africa - something for which we have been struggling for years. Today, the General Assembly recognizes South Africa as a full-fledged participant in its work.

The activities of the United Nations in Africa, and specifically with respect to South Africa, give today's meeting special meaning: a feeling of joy and celebration, hope and expectation. For so many years we stood shoulder to shoulder with our African comrades in their struggle for equality, democracy and peace: so many wills striving together here, in solidarity and cooperation with the leaders of that noble country.

The United Nations has a legitimate right to feel proud of the important role it has played in the South African process, always cooperating with the people of that country at all times, and prepared to develop a special relationship with them. Such a relationship is growing more timely and urgent than ever before.

The United Nations does not often get to meet and say, "Mission accomplished", but today we are happy to be able to say precisely that. Granted, the United Nations role may have been secondary compared with the resolve with which the South African people itself tackled its great task and decided to meet its destiny and, as President Mandela himself has said, to begin its own process of reconciliation.

These may be times of vertiginous political and technological change, but we sometimes feel discouraged at the persistence of tenacious negative aspects of the human condition rooted in selfishness and in the darkest chapters of our history. That is why this event, this meeting, this celebration renews our faith in humanity and its future, the progress of its intellect, and the solidarity of its actions. This is a just, noble cause that enhances our values and our humanity. States have been able to maintain solidarity and to work together in realizing the lofty ideals so well expressed in the Charter of the United Nations, which almost 50 years after its adoption continues to light our path.

Africa's prosperity should be the new crusade of the world community. We must promote pragmatic activities to that end in all areas of international action deemed necessary, and in which we shall be asked to cooperate. This is a shared responsibility; we must demonstrate in deeds our renewed commitment to South Africa and to the entire African continent. The entire international community must be committed to cooperate in promoting social and economic development; only thus can we ensure genuine, lasting, productive peace and, ultimately, the flourishing of the humane, moral and ethical ideals of which President Mandela and his Government are such exemplars.

Today more than ever before we must support Africa, we must do all we can to consolidate progress already made and to promote economic and social progress; for this we need resources. The international community must spare no effort to gather these resources, by traditional and innovative means devised by the inexhaustible creativity of the human being. My country reiterates its political will to take a full, responsible part in whatever tasks the international community may decide on in that regard.

Mr. Rahman (Bangladesh), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Chile has been a member of the Trust Fund for South Africa from its inception; I have represented my country there for the past four years. We held our last meeting recently; as we marked the successful attainment of the Fund's goals, I ventured to point out that while we had eliminated apartheid from the legal standpoint, there was no doubt that the aftermath of that barbarous system will long persist in the lives of the South African people. We have won the major victory of eliminating apartheid from the Constitution; we now face the great challenge of ensuring that apartheid's effects upon the people are eliminated too. The United Nations must therefore continue, with undiminished will, determination and

impetus, to work with South Africa. As we all know, it is not enough to state things on paper; they must be translated into facts.

As countries of the third world, as developing countries, we face these realities together with South Africa. Today we welcome South Africa to this Hall - and to the common struggle that lies ahead for the countries of the third world.

It is with great emotion that, on behalf of the Government and the people of Chile, I convey the welcome and the greetings of the international community to the Republic of South Africa.

Mr. Sucharipa (Austria): This is a great day for the United Nations. A dream has come true at long last.

As already stated by the Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States speaking on behalf of all members of the Group and the President of the European Union, we warmly welcome the return of a democratic and non-racial South Africa to the international community as represented in the General Assembly of the United Nations. In view of Austria's long-standing and active commitment to this course, let me add a few remarks to those statements.

With the entry into force of its first non-racial and democratic Constitution and the holding of one-person-one-vote elections last April, and with the convening of its new Parliament and the installation of its new President and its Government of National Unity last May, South Africa entered into a new and promising period of its history. Two outstanding personalities of South Africa's political life have contributed more than anybody else to this fundamental change. Nelson Mandela, now President, since his liberation in early 1990, and indeed before, has actively pursued the peaceful liberation of South Africa from the burden of apartheid. In President Frederik de Klerk he found a negotiating partner who stood by the conviction that peaceful and just development can never be based upon the principle of the domination of one race by another.

The Nobel Peace Prize awarded jointly to Nelson Mandela and Frederik de Klerk justly rewarded the shared courage and tenacity of these two statesmen in bringing about this change of tide, from the oppressive system of apartheid to cooperation in democracy.

Together the South African parties undertook important efforts to reach mutual understanding and to make necessary concessions in order to arrive at a common aim: the establishment of a peaceful, multi-ethnic, multi-racial and multi-confessional South Africa. We all fervently wish to see the lasting success of this model, which would not only be essential for the future of South Africa itself, but would also have examplary importance reaching far beyond South Africa.

The efforts for national reconciliation in South Africa had widespread support from the international community. Austria therefore commends all those acting in the international field whose actions contributed in a constructive way to the elimination of apartheid. In this context, we gladly recognize the important contribution of the United Nations to the struggle for human dignity, human rights and democratic values. I should also like to underline the assistance given by the United Nations in ensuring that the first democratic elections could take place in South Africa in largely non-violent conditions, and we pay tribute to the many election observers, some of whom Austria had the great pleasure of providing.

Certainly we all know that the recent establishment of a democratic Government must now be followed by a further active involvement of the international community in rendering assistance to the new South Africa. Rightly, the victims of apartheid have high expectations that the new democratic order will be tantamount to tangible economic and social advancement for them. An active and thriving economy will facilitate the successful accomplishment of the process of peaceful transition to a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. Austria will strive to contribute to bringing about the socio-economic underpinnings for a prospering democracy, using bilateral and multilateral channels. We equally look forward to the important role South Africa will play on its own continent and within the United Nations. My delegation has listened with great interest to the important statement delivered today before the Assembly by Foreign Minister Nzo in this regard.

We are certain that on the basis of its own past experience, South Africa will be able to make a major contribution to our work, including to the important issue of human riqhts and human development.

Austria welcomes the resolutions that have been adopted by the General Assembly today. We are looking forward to the forthcoming meetings of the General

Assembly with the active participation of a delegation from the united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

Ms. des Iles (Trinidad and Tobago): On this great day, it is a signal honour for me, on behalf of the Government and the people of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, to welcome a free and democratic South Africa as a full participant in the General Assembly and in the activities of the United Nations as a whole.

In celebrating this historic day, I wish to pay tribute to President Nelson Mandela and the other courageous and dedicated leaders of South Africa, as well as to the millions of their compatriots who have sacrificed so much over these past decades for the dawn of a new day of freedom, justice and democracy in South Africa. Their tireless struggles were without question the determining factor in bringing to an end the oppressive system of apartheid.

Almost from its inception, the United Nations has played a crucial role in the struggle against apartheid. In furtherance of the principles and purposes of the Charter of the Organization and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations has over the years exerted its moral authority on successive oppressive regimes in South Africa through the adoption of political, military, economic, social and cultural sanctions. It has also extended considerable support to those within and outside South Africa working towards the elimination of the apartheid system. Trinidad and Tobago has been privileged to serve on the Special Committee against Apartheid for the last two decades.

The long-awaited emergence of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa under the helm of a Government of national unity is first and foremost a victory for the South African people and their leaders. It is also a victory for the United Nations. As South Africa now enters a new phase of national reconciliation and nation building, it is incumbent upon the United Nations to continue investing in the country's future by actively participating in the struggle to reverse the legacies of apartheid.

The final report of the Special Committee against Apartheid provides some insight into the nature of the challenges confronting the new non-racial Government of South Africa. Many have endured indescribable suffering, privation and humiliation, and too many young people have been robbed of their childhood and deprived of the vital tools with which to build a secure and prosperous future. The bleak statistics lay bare the formidable tasks facing the new leadership, which are compounded by the ever-rising expectations of an eager population.

The Secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in a recent report, has identified the two major challenges confronting the new South Africa as the redressing of the grave socio-economic injustices and distortions resulting from the legacy of apartheid and the transformation of the country into a full and competitive member of the world economic community. The reconstruction and development plans already afoot in South Africa will address these tasks, combined with the efforts to consolidate a negotiated consensus on the tackling of these and other problems among the various sectors of society.

However, the new Government of National Unity cannot be expected to undertake these tremendous tasks entirely on its own. The international community must heed the call of President Nelson Mandela for its continued support, as his country strives to build peace and prosperity for all South Africans. In this regard, the International Donors' Conference on Human Resources Development in Post-Apartheid South Africa, to be held in Johannesburg from 28 to 30 June 1994, presents a timely opportunity for those best able to assist to continue to make a constructive contribution to the future of South Africa and the region as a whole.

Trinidad and Tobago strongly supports the recommendation contained in the resolution adopted earlier today concerning the proposed appointment of a high-level coordinator for United Nations development activities in South Africa. Such an appointment would serve to ensure that maximum use is made of the limited resources available within the United Nations system for the reconstruction and development efforts in South Africa. My delegation also welcomes the proposal on the question of the arrears accumulated by the apartheid regime over the years and the universal recognition of the exceptional nature of the circumstances now facing the new Government of South Africa.

We are now five months shy of the twentieth anniversary of the suspension of South Africa from the work of the General Assembly for crimes committed against humanity. Let this day serve not only as one of great joy and pride for the Government and the people of South Africa and others throughout the globe but also as a day of inspiration for the United Nations as we strive to overcome the many complex and divisive problems besetting the world. The resilience, determination and

capacity for forgiveness and compromise demonstrated by the people of South Africa should indeed be a source of great hope and encouragement for us all.

Mr. Acharya (Nepal): Today is a historic day. Twenty years ago South Africa was debarred from participating in the General Assembly of the United Nations. Twenty years later - today - South Africa has returned to its seat in the General Assembly. This is a great change. This change has occurred not just in South Africa, but in the whole world. If the global change has had implications for South Africa, the change in South Africa will have global implications as well.

As a founder member of the Special Committee against Apartheid Nepal takes great pleasure in welcoming South Africa back to its rightful place in the General Assembly. Nepal actively participated in the struggle against apartheid simply because we believed that the division of humanity on the basis of skin colour was absolutely wrong. Nepal will always continue to raise its voice for freedom, equality and justice.

The struggle against injustice is historical and universal. The struggle in South Africa was not the struggle of the South African blacks alone. The end of apartheid is a triumph of man's historic struggle for freedom, equality, justice and peace, If the history of civilization is supposed to be the history of man's struggle for freedom, the end of apartheid in South Africa is a milestone in the progress of civilization.

South Africa today is in the process of change which may still be painful. However, the people of South Africa have been very fortunate to have the leadership of President Mandela, Mr. F. W. de Klerk, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and many others whose vision and political courage made this change possible.

While South Africa has begun its march towards national reconstruction and development, many African countries today are deeply embroiled in large-scale bloodshed and massacres owing to ethnic conflicts. Although we cannot forget Bosnia and the Middle East and many other theatres of conflict, the majority of United Nations peace-keeping are in the African continent.

Negotiation is a civilized way for conflict resolution. South Africa has given us an example. The lesson of South African experience must be learned not just by the other African countries but by the countries in Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America. We can see South Africa as a rising sun whose rays fanning out in the African horizon may enlighten every African nation and eventually the entire world.

The transfer of power to the elected President of the Government of National Unity, Mr. Mandela, was a significant moment in the history of the entire world, which was watching the event. However, the removal of the formal bases of apartheid will not automatically result in social progress. A political framework capable of achieving and protecting the values that are associated with liberty and tolerance is necessary to respond to the socio-economic needs of the people.

The United Nations has been in the forefront against all discrimination based on race, colour, sex or language in all parts of the world. The purposes and principles of its Charter have been the source of inspiration for all peoples and countries. Several resolutions and declarations of the Security Council and the General Assembly helped accelerate the process of eradicating apartheid and inspired everyone to work collectively in our fight against it.

The work of the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA) during the transition period was commendable. Likewise, the Special Committee against Apartheid, with its continuous efforts, successfully worked as the focal point in the United Nations for activities to support and encourage the anti-apartheid movement since its establishment.

We are confident that the leaders of South Africa will be successful in their endeavours to build and reconstruct a prosperous South Africa. We warmly welcome the new non-racial and democratic South Africa back to its seat in the United Nations and look forward to working closely with the delegation of South Africa for the promotion of international peace and security. As one of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77, Nepal also welcomes South Africa in them.

Mr. Mumbengegwi (Zimbabwe): This is an extremely auspicious occasion not only for South Africa and the southern Africa region but also for the African continent and the world.

For South Africa, re-admission into the family of nations means the acceptance by the international community that their long and difficult struggle for equality and justice has been won; for the southern Africa

region it means the emergence of a peaceful and reliable partner in the pursuit of a common prosperity; for the African continent, it marks the closing chapter in the total decolonization of the continent; and for the world it signifies the successful conclusion of an extraordinary collective struggle against apartheid, which the international community had correctly characterized a crime against humanity.

There is therefore cause for all-round celebration. However, in the midst of all the celebration, we would be remiss if we did not salute and congratulate the people of South Africa on their achievement of what had hitherto been regarded as "mission impossible". We all know how deep a chasm divided the privileged minority and the oppressed and disenfranchised majority. But once the people and their leadership resolved to create a new order through broadly based negotiations, the process appeared so easy. Indeed, let us congratulate them for their determination, courage and vision.

As we welcome South Africa to its rightful place among the community of nations, who could be more appropriate to reclaim South Africa's seat in this General Assembly than that veteran freedom fighter, Alfred Nzo, who has dedicated his entire life to the struggle to eradicate apartheid? We are all familiar with his untiring work as the Secretary-General of the African National Congress over the years. We certainly welcome him today in his new capacity as the Foreign Minister of a free South Africa - a liberated South Africa. We also welcome his important statement to this General Assembly.

The inauguration of that heroic son of Africa, Nelson Mandela, as President marked the liberation not only of South Africa, but also of our entire region. We can now look forward to an era of peace - an era of political and economic cooperation in the region and beyond. Never again will we have to divert scarce and much-needed resources from development to armaments.

As we celebrate the end of apartheid as an ideology and commend the people of South Africa for skilfully negotiating the transition from minority rule to non-racial democracy, let it be remembered that the legacy of apartheid still remains. Foreign Minister Nzo, in his most important statement, clearly spelled out the reconstruction and development needs of the new South Africa. He further emphasized the need to demonstrate that democracy can and does work. The United Nations and the international community thus have a duty and an obligation to assist the new South Africa meet the legitimate aspirations of its people.

Zimbabwe is extremely pleased that the item "Elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa" has been deleted from the agenda of the United Nations. This signifies the successful conclusion of a protracted struggle spearheaded by a coalition of forces represented by the liberation movements at the national level, the front-line States at the regional level, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) at the continental level and the United Nations at the international level.

At the national level, our tribute and appreciation naturally go to President Mandela, who, after decades of personal suffering and incarceration, emerged stronger than ever to lead and guide the people of South Africa as they undertook the most delicate and painstaking negotiations that led to the relatively peaceful establishment of the new South Africa. As the representative of the Chairman of the front-line States, I leave the assessment of that group's contribution to others. At the continental level, our appreciation is due to the OAU, through its able and resourceful Secretary General, Salim Ahmed Salim, and its Liberation Committee, under its indomitable Executive Secretary, General Hashim Mbita. At the international level, our appreciation is due to the energetic Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali; to our able and skilled Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, Professor Ibrahim Gambari; and to the Director and staff of the Centre against Apartheid.

However, when all is said and done, this victory belongs to the people of South Africa. We all wish them well.

Mr. Phoofolo (Lesotho): It is indeed proper and fitting that Mr. Insanally preside over this auspicious occasion. His great country, Guyana, has always been at the forefront of the international community's struggle to eliminate apartheid in South Africa. Lesotho is happy to see him presiding as we all warmly welcome the new democratic South Africa back into the United Nations fold.

In our part of the world, the women would be ululating and the men would be dancing and singing songs of praise as they celebrated and commemorated a historic day such as this. It is historic, because this is the very first time the highest body of the United Nations

has addressed post-apartheid South Africa; indeed, this is a source of great joy and jubilation for all of us.

This supreme body of the United Nations decided in 1974 to exclude the then-racist South Africa from participating in the affairs of the Assembly and its organs as part of a peaceful effort calling upon South Africa for change. This very same Assembly, having so persistently and so vigorously pressed for the elimination of apartheid and for a negotiated settlement, is today proud that a new, non-racial Government of National Unity, under the wise and capable leadership of Mr. Nelson Mandela, has been ushered in.

Members will recall that it was through the commendable efforts of this Assembly that the aspirations and frustrations of all peace-loving South Africans were rightly and justifiably expressed in the December 1989 United Nations Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, which was unanimously approved by the international community at the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly. What has transpired since the adoption of that Declaration is now common knowledge.

The decision to hold South Africa's first-ever free elections in accordance with the principles of universal suffrage opened the way for the country's transition to a democratic and non-racial society, an objective that had been defined and expressed in the Declaration. Since 1910 the desire of the oppressed majority in South Africa had been to fully and actively participate, as ordinary citizens, in the election and choice of their democratic Government.

As we welcome South Africa back into the community of nations, we should remember that this is a historic month in that country. Eighteen years ago, in this very month, the youth of South Africa resolved to join their fathers and mothers in the long, arduous and very bloody struggle for their birthright. They also paid dearly for that struggle and sacrificed their future for freedom and justice. Their resilience has paid peace dividends. As of today, they too have elected their Government of National Unity and Reconciliation, which is responsive to participatory democracy. It has been a glorious struggle for freedom, democracy, human dignity and human rights - nothing more and nothing less.

Mr. Ouedraogo (Burkina Faso), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The Kingdom of Lesotho greatly admires all South Africans for their laudable efforts, which have decisively eliminated the unjust and inhuman system of apartheid. The spectacular success of the African National Congress (ANC) has not only concluded the ugly chapter of apartheid, but has also completed the liberation of the African continent. Only the magnanimous and gracious President Mandela could demonstrate to everyone that the ANC victory was for all the people of South Africa by accommodating all in the formation of first post-apartheid Government of South Africa.

It has been the relentless struggle of all concerned that has carried South Africa to where it is today. Their patience and negotiating abilities since the first Conference on a Democratic South Africa cannot be surpassed. The South Africans taught us such new expressions as "sufficient consensus" in the art of negotiation. It is that spirit of sufficient consensus that has allowed them truly to cross the Rubicon and land on the shores of national unity and national reconciliation.

The Kingdom of Lesotho is fully conscious of the fact that the new Government of National Unity in South Africa faces many challenges ahead. It is a mammoth task, since it must address the injustices and inequities which are the legacies of apartheid. The new South Africa being readmitted to the community of nations is still looking to the international community for help in uplifting itself economically and socially, as the country is not yet fully developed, as a result of many wasted and wasteful years of apartheid.

Economic and technical assistance to South Africa need to be expanded. We add our voice to the call on the world community to support the economic reconstruction and development of South Africa now that the political war has been decisively won. Aid to South Africa will help provide basic needs and social and physical infrastructure for the underprivileged majority, which suffered in the past as a result of apartheid.

It would be remiss of us not to make reference to one of the great sons of South Africa. Mr. F. W. de Klerk, now second Executive Deputy President of South Africa, courageously and commendably set the reform process in motion. He followed the signs to the final destination of the democratic route. He has contributed enormously to the birth of a new nation in South Africa. It is great men with great minds like Mr. de Klerk who would swiftly move to concede defeat to President Mandela, the

deserving leader of the majority Government of National Unity.

To the Special Committee against Apartheid we say "Good work, well done". The mission has been accomplished. The same sentiments are extended to the support staff behind the scenes. We heartily welcome the final report of the Special Committee against Apartheid. That informative report seals the ugly chapter of apartheid and highlights in a most lucid manner the most commendable efforts made by the Special Committee towards the declared objective of eliminating apartheid.

We fully supported draft resolutions A/48/L.58 and A/48/L.59. We are delighted that, as a gift to the new South Africa, resolution A/48/L.58 was carried by consensus. It was this body that rightly excluded apartheid South Africa from its midst, and the new South Africa should as far as possible be spared the problems that arose as a result of that decision. By adopting that resolution the international community has genuinely restored the full rights of South Africa to participate freely and effectively in the deliberations of this body and its organs.

The emerging historic era in Africa is worth celebrating, since the end of apartheid marks a transformational and historic course for the rest of Africa and the southern African region, which had to bear the bitter fruits of the system of apartheid.

The second phase of post-apartheid South Africa will be the hardest, in that there has to be a contained climate of political, economic and social stability in which all the people of South Africa can freely and fully exercise their fundamental human rights. The implementation and practicability of the post-apartheid Constitution of South Africa has yet to be seen to provide the overall framework in this regard.

Through the completion of its mammoth task in South Africa, the United Nations has not only made history, but has followed its course of maintaining international peace and security.

We salute the great people of South Africa and their leaders, particularly the fallen heroes and heroines. Lesotho will continue to walk the same road with its immediate neighbour as it enters the new battle lines on the economic and social fronts. In this context, Lesotho was honoured and privileged to have had the new South Africa represented officially, for the first time, at the Southern African Development Community annual meeting of Ministers of Mining at Maseru on 20 May, 10 days following the historic inauguration of the first democratically elected President of South Africa, Mr. Nelson Mandela.

In conclusion, we in Lesotho say "Let the blood spilled and lost in the struggle against apartheid not have been lost in vain, but be valued, for it has nourished the cause of freedom, justice, liberty, democracy and human rights that we all cherish. To you, our brothers and sisters, our immediate neighbours, we heartily extend a warm welcome and join you in your moment of joy and happiness".

Mr. Kalpagé (Sri Lanka): Today the United Nations celebrates one of its greatest triumphs. We welcome a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa to its rightful place as a full Member of this Organization. The United Nations sustained a relentless campaign for the elimination of the system of apartheid, which held the overwhelming majority of the people of South Africa in bondage to a pernicious ideology based on racism and maintained by iniquitous laws and armed force. As Abraham Lincoln once said, no nation can long endure half slave and half free.

The struggle against apartheid has been a universal one, bringing together the entire membership of the United Nations, representing not only the highest ideals enshrined in the Charter, but also the collective will of all Member States. The Non-Aligned Movement, regional associations such as the Organization of African Unity, the Commonwealth and virtually every other representative grouping have expressed their repugnance for the system of apartheid.

The front-line States of southern Africa have played a major role as well, sustaining a struggle which has sometimes spread beyond the borders of South Africa. The Special Committee against Apartheid, which successfully concludes its mandate, deserves our gratitude for all the work it has have done.

The struggle against apartheid is now over. "Free at last", proclaimed Mr. Nelson Mandela, the leader of the African National Congress and now President of a free South Africa.

While we all celebrate the dawn of freedom, it is the people of South Africa who suffered the burden of apartheid. The real struggle was conducted not in the conference rooms of this Organization or in other forums

dedicated to the overthrow of the system: the real struggle was on the soil of South Africa where the brunt of the system's injustices had to be courageously faced, entailing great sacrifices. In his inauguration speech President Nelson Mandela recognized the role played by the masses of South Africa and their leaders - political, religious, women, youth, business, traditional and others - in keeping alive the struggle for freedom even in its darkest hours.

President Mandela himself was an inspiration to his people even as he languished in prison. He remained free even in captivity. The lesson of history, as President Mandela has observed, is that none of us alone can achieve success. It is necessary to act together as a united people for national reconciliation and for nation-building.

The movement for justice and freedom in South Africa could have been prolonged, more lives might have been lost and greater sacrifice might have had to be endured. Yet the inexorable progress towards freedom and justice was hastened and the pace to independence was quickened by the far-sighted vision and courage of those who led the negotiated revolution of South Africa, particularly President Nelson Mandela. The Honourable F. W. de Klerk has played a bold and remarkable role in dismantling the system of apartheid. As the draft resolution before us observes,

> "the foundations for a new, non-racial and democratic South Africa with equal and guaranteed rights for each and all" *(A/48/L.58, para. 2)*

have been laid through broad-based negotiations.

Yet, as the people of South Africa themselves well realize, further challenges lie ahead. The people of South Africa have pledged to redress socio-economic imbalances and to liberate themselves from the bondage of poverty, deprivation, suffering, and gender and other discrimination. The Foreign Minister of South Africa gave us this morning a detailed account of the development plans of the new Government.

Sri Lanka has steadfastly supported all measures against apartheid. We offer the new South Africa heartfelt congratulations on its heroic victory. We heartily welcome its full participation in the work of the United Nations and we wish it well in the future.

Mr. Rey Cordoba (Colombia) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Colombia supports the statements made by the Ambassador of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-aligned Countries.

We are here on this historic occasion to welcome the new Government of South Africa. Today South Africa is once against taking its seat in the General Assembly as a sovereign, free and independent State able to guide the destiny of its people.

In the elections held last April, the people of South Africa showed their determination to give birth to a new society where conciliation and national reconstruction would be the main challenges.

Long years of struggle and negotiations preceded the historic events of late April. For many years, the South African people, headed by unique leaders, persevered patiently in its struggle to attain the rights denied it by a minority regime. This spirit of the South African struggle is an example to us all and confirms our dedication to the elimination of racism and discrimination in all its forms.

At this time we are honoured to greet the Foreign Minister of South Africa, His Excellency Mr. Alfred Nzo, and, through him, President Nelson Mandela and the leaders who are accompanying him; the people of South Africa; and all the men, women, young people and children who through their work and with their lives laid the foundations for the emergence of a new, apartheid-free South Africa.

The life of President Nelson Mandela is a testament to struggle, to rectitude, to the clear will for reconciliation and to a deep dedication to union and to sacrifice for his people. His struggle and that of the South African people set an example for us all. We also acknowledge the efforts of Vice-President de Klerk in meeting the legitimate demands of the South African majority.

The end of apartheid is of major significance to the entire international community and to all those who contributed in one way or another to its elimination. We would like in particular to mention the work of the Special Committee against Apartheid, which for more than 30 years supported the South African people as it marched to freedom. We can say that its mission was carried out in an exceptional fashion and that it can take pride in its accomplishment.

On 10 May 1994 the Government of National Unity, the legitimate and representative Government, undertook the challenge of guiding the South African nation. We are in favour of all the efforts to maximize international cooperation and thereby contribute to the difficult task of national reconstruction. In its coordinating efforts the United Nations will have to recognize and respect the principle of the sovereign equality of the South African State and not exceed the limits of its competence as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions.

We particularly acknowledge the contribution of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement. The recent Ministerial Conference held in Cairo received South Africa as its one hundred and eleventh member. This is a most significant event for the Movement, which remained firm in condemning apartheid. Likewise, through its efforts and solidarity, it ensured rejection of the apartheid regime by the United Nations and recognition of the legitimacy of the struggle of the South African people at its most vulnerable and difficult time.

Development activities, within the legitimate United Nations machinery, deserve our full support. We consider that such activities must be carried out within the institutional framework established by the General Assembly, specifically through resolution 47/199 of 22 December 1992 and resolution 48/209 of 21 December 1993. With respect to paragraph 11 of resolution A/48/L.58, we joined in the consensus; like the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid and the President of the General Assembly, we consider that the proposed appointment of a high-level coordinator for United Nations development activities in South Africa will be strictly governed by the provisions of resolutions 47/199 and 47/209.

In that light, we reiterate our readiness to support the new Government of South Africa in its difficult task of overcoming the effects of apartheid in an independent, sovereign, united, democratic, non-racial nation free to choose its own future as a full Member of the United Nations.

It is my honour in conclusion to read out the following message from the Minister for Foreign Relations of Colombia, Mrs. Noemí Sanín de Rubio, to the South African nation on this historic occasion.

"Mr. President, it is my pleasure, on the occasion of the resumed session of the General Assembly to welcome the return to the Assembly of the Republic of South Africa, to inform you that Colombia enthusiastically hails the return of the South Africa that has emerged victorious from the lengthy and painful process that has enabled it to stand before the international community today as a democratic, multiracial society. My country fully shares the General Assembly's satisfaction at this most important event.

"Through you, Mr. President, I convey to the South African delegation to the United Nations, and through that delegation to the friendly people and the Government of South Africa, the warmest greetings of the people and Government of Colombia, and inform them of our readiness to work with them to promote and achieve the purposes of the United Nations".

The President: I call next on His Excellency Mr. Salman Khursheed, Minister of State for External Affairs of the Government of India.

Mr. Khursheed (India): It is with a sense of fulfilment and joy that I address the Assembly today to represent India. This is indeed a historic occasion. Today's proceedings mark the fruition of the long and arduous struggle of the people of South Africa to end the shameful system of apartheid in that country and to join the proud community of nations that have consistently supported the objective of establishing a non-racial, democratic and united South Africa. If the decision of the General Assembly in 1974 not to accept the credentials of the delegation of South Africa represented the rejection by the international community of the inhuman crime of apartheid and its perpetrators, at today's meeting the Assembly rejoices over the success of the struggle of the South African people to end that inhuman system.

We welcome the new South Africa in our midst, as an equal Member of this Organization ready to participate in all its activities in accordance with to the purposes and principles of the Charter. The people of India join the courageous people of South Africa with joy, happiness and pride in celebrating their achievement and what it signifies for humanity. We pay a tribute to President Mandela, who symbolizes the aspirations of the South African people and the values of non-racialism, democracy and peace, and to the leadership of South Africa for their courage and steadfastness in pursuing a goal which, not too long ago, appeared remote. We

welcome the presence here of the Foreign Minister of South Africa, His Excellency Mr. A. B. Nzo, as the representative of the new South Africa.

India can justifiably share the pride of the South African people in celebrating the dawn of the new era in South Africa. We see the end of apartheid in that country as vindication of the human values we have always held high and pursued steadfastly and unwaveringly. India was in the vanguard of the anti-apartheid struggle, and was the first to raise the subject in the United Nations, in 1946, even before achieving our own independence; we did this because we felt that it was our own cause and not just that of a distant neighbour.

In a way, the achievements of the South African struggle are a homage to Mahatma Gandhi, the father of our nation. About a century ago, when he was in South Africa, he saw a link between the struggles for freedom in that country and in ours. Our own freedom movement was guided by his experiences in South Africa. He said,

> "Truly speaking, it was after I went to South Africa that I became what I am now. My love for South Africa and my concern for her problems are no less than for India".

The establishment of a non-racial and democratic Government in South Africa represents a victory for universal human values. As Prime Minister Narasimha Rao said in his statement on the occasion of the inauguration of the Government of National Unity in South Africa on 10 May 1994,

> "The South African struggle has shown that the strength of the human spirit, the strength of values of moral conviction, and the strength of uncompromising struggle against domination and exploitation are indeed formidable forces for change". *(A/48/941, annex)*

Evidently, the restoration of equality amongst all races in South Africa is a matter of immense and direct satisfaction to the people and the Government of India.

The change in South Africa has been made possible through the efforts of its brave people. The leadership provided by President Mandela and others has guided the broad-based negotiations in the last few laps to the successful conclusion of establishing a Government of National Unity based on a democratic and non-racial interim Constitution. The international community can be justifiably proud of itself in having supported the process of change at several critical junctures in the history of the anti-apartheid struggle. The various decisions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, including measures relating to sanctions, served the useful role of putting pressure where it was needed crucially.

The positive approach of the General Assembly in the last few years of providing encouragement to the people of South Africa in step with the changes which were taking place channelled the efforts of the international community in the appropriate direction. India has always joined these international efforts in the United Nations, in the Commonwealth and in the Non-Aligned Movement on the basis of our own historic ties with South Africa and our firm belief in the universal human values of democracy and non-racialism. It was this belief, and our commitment to support the countries in southern Africa in their struggle against the consequences of apartheid, that led India to take the initiative of establishing the Africa Fund at the Harare summit of non-aligned countries in September 1986. Through 1992, when the Fund was wound up, it provided substantial economic assistance to the front-line States.

A sordid chapter in the history of South Africa has closed. The struggle has, however, not ended. The people and Government of South Africa continue to face the debilitating consequences of the system of apartheid in the shape of severe socio-economic inequalities currently existing among different segments of the South African population.

A political dream that has been fulfilled is now being reshaped in the form of the increased expectations of the people of South Africa, who have been suffering through many decades of socio-economic discrimination and disadvantages. The success of the South African experiment calls for effective measures to address these problems. The reconstruction and development plan now under consideration by the Government of South Africa includes a number of policy suggestions in this regard.

While we wish all success to the new Government of South Africa in developing appropriate policy instruments to address the problem of socio-economic inequities and economic growth, the role of the international community, as represented by the United Nations and individual countries, cannot be over-emphasized. We welcome the suggestion in this regard made in the report of the Special Committee against Apartheid (A/48/22/Add.1). We also welcome

the recommendation that the Secretary-General consider appointing, in consultation with the Government of South Africa, a coordinator for United Nations development activities in the country in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, including resolutions 47/199 and 48/209.

At this stage, may I also congratulate the Special Committee against Apartheid on a task well done. The activities of the Committee and support from its members generated international support for anti-apartheid movements in South Africa at a time when it was most needed. I must also applaud the Committee for deciding to terminate its mandate with the adoption of the resolution today.

The commitment of India to South Africa does not end with the end of the political struggle and the establishment of the Government of National Unity. The greatest need of the South African people at the present juncture lies in the realm of economic growth linked to socio-economic development. India itself has gone through the stages of low growth and development. We are keen to share and look forward to sharing with the Government of the new South Africa our own experiences. India has developed considerable expertise in the development of entrepreneurship, human resource development through training and so forth, and development-linked growth through small and medium industries. We stand ready to work with the Government of South Africa in any of the areas where bilateral cooperation between our two countries could prove mutually beneficial. We are confident that such bilateral cooperation will contribute to the stability and prosperity of our common region.

Mr. Allarey (Philippines): The Philippines joins with pride and joy in the triumph of the human spirit, reason and decency over the vicious apartheid system. We salute and embrace our South African brethren on this historic achievement. Their wisdom, courage and perseverance have made it possible for South Africa to start anew and establish a united, democratic and non-racial community.

The peaceful and successful installation of a democratic dispensation under the leadership of South Africa's foremost freedom fighter, President Nelson Mandela, has breathed new life and rekindled hopes for a better tomorrow for its diverse and divided society.

The painstaking negotiations undertaken between South Africa's political parties and the former regime have demonstrated the political maturity and the spirit of goodwill of its acknowledged leaders in choosing the democratic process to shape their destiny. As the Government of National Unity steers South Africa's transition to democracy, it is my delegation's hope that the protection and advancement of the interests and welfare of its long-suffering people would be uppermost on the Government's agenda.

Undoubtedly, varied challenges will have to be faced by the South African Government and people as they tread the road to economic and social recovery and growth. Assistance from all sectors of our global community, particularly the United Nations, will therefore be vital.

In this regard, we wish to reassure them of our continued assistance and support as they embark on the arduous task of building a new society based on respect for human rights and the promotion of economic and social equality.

Continued vigilance must, however, remain in the minds and hearts of our South African brothers and sisters to ensure that the evil that was apartheid does not take root again and that the legacies of that vicious system are completely weeded out from the bosom of the Earth.

My delegation would like to commend the efforts undertaken by the United Nations and its specialized agencies, and in particular the Special Committee Against Apartheid, of which the Philippines is a Charter member. The Committee, which was established in 1962, conscientiously monitored the events in South Africa and followed closely developments relating to the promotion of international assistance in helping South Africans overcome the negative social and economic consequences of apartheid, maintaining contacts with academic institutions and civic communities, consulting with parties participating in the political process and undertaking other activities aimed at supporting peaceful change until the very last days of apartheid.

With the adoption of the two resolutions today, the United Nations, the Special Committee against Apartheid and the international community, at this point in time, can rightfully take pride in the contributions they have made over several decades to the efforts leading to the elimination of the scourge of apartheid and the support they have given to all South Africans who have courageously struggled against this evil.

Our most profound congratulations go to the Special Committee Chairman, Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari of Nigeria, its members and the Centre against Apartheid, who have commendably discharged their duties with competence, dedication and industry.

It is also significant to note the key role played by the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA) in South Africa's transition to a democratic State. For several decades, the United Nations supported the struggle of the people of South Africa by working relentlessly to isolate the apartheid regime.

We warmly applaud South Africa's resumption of its seat as a full Member of the United Nations. As it rejoins the family of nations, we look forward to its meaningful participation and active involvement in the work of our world Organization.

The dark chapter of apartheid is no more. Cooperation and brotherhood can only serve to strengthen the foundations of a united South Africa. The Philippines is at one with the rest of humanity in yearning for a genuine and durable peace in South Africa. Let us join hands and make this happen.

Mr. Malone (Canada), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Mr. Khan (Pakistan): My delegation welcomes in our midst His Excellency Mr. Alfred Nzo, Foreign Minister of the Republic of South Africa. We should like to thank the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid for his introductory statement made earlier today.

The question of apartheid in South Africa has been on the international agenda for more than four decades. Throughout that period the United Nations resolutely opposed apartheid - a crime against humanity - and made consistent and unrelenting efforts to achieve its total elimination. Our meeting here today signals the closure of a long and painful chapter in the history of South Africa. My delegation congratulates and salutes all South Africans and their leadership for their courage, wisdom, resilience and vision in steering South Africa away from the odious practice of apartheid and towards the path of freedom, tolerance and equality.

It is a matter of profound satisfaction for the international community that, with the entry into force of the first non-racial and democratic constitution of South Africa on 27 April 1994 and the holding of the first non-racial elections from 26 to 29 April 1994, apartheid has come to an end. This is indeed the triumph of all South Africans and their political leaders for bringing a peaceful end to apartheid and for laying foundations for a new, non-racial and democratic South Africa with equal guaranteed rights for one and all.

As a manifestation of the joy of the people of Pakistan at this historic transition in South Africa, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, personally participated in the installation ceremony of President Nelson Mandela. We are confident that, under his able and sagacious leadership, scars of the past will soon heal and the goal of nation-building achieved. The freedom struggle in South Africa has been of epic proportions, with few parallels in modern history. Without the leadership of Mr. Nelson Mandela and the courage and sacrifices of the South African people, it would not have been possible to end this unjust system of apartheid.

Pakistan has been a strong and steadfast supporter of international efforts to end apartheid in South Africa. We have consistently extended moral and political support to the African National Congress. We therefore rejoice in the birth of a free and democratic South Africa. The socio-economic disparities caused by apartheid need to be urgently addressed to ensure the stable and peaceful development of post-apartheid South Africa. In this context the international community should now provide large-scale economic and technical cooperation to South Africa to put it on the road to sustainable development. The major economic Powers, the financial institutions, private banks and multinational companies should now play their full role in the revitalization of South Africa.

The United Nations, the Special Committee against Apartheid and the international community can take legitimate pride in the contributions they have made over many decades to the efforts leading to the elimination of apartheid and in extending support to all those courageous South Africans who fought and struggled against apartheid. In this context, ever since its establishment in 1962, the Special Committee against Apartheid, as the United Nations body entrusted with monitoring of developments in South Africa, has played a vital role in mobilizing international support for the elimination of apartheid. As we terminate the Special Committee with the successful completion of its mandate, we wish to record our profound appreciation for the work it did. We also wish to thank the Chairman of the Special Committee, the Permanent Representative of

Nigeria, Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, for presenting the last report of that Committee and bringing its work to a successful conclusion.

The United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa has brought tangible benefits to the South African people. Pakistan has had the honour to be represented on the Committee of Trustees of this Fund for a long time. We fully share the recommendation of the Committee of Trustees that it has fulfilled its mandate and that the balance in the Trust Fund be transferred to the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa for use in its educational and training projects in South Africa.

My delegation would like to avail itself of this opportunity to commend the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the successful implementation and conclusion of the mandates entrusted to him by the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, in particular Council resolutions 765 (1992), 772 (1992) and 894 (1994) through the efforts of his Special Representative, as well as the provisions of Assembly resolution 48/159 A relating to the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA).

As South Africa returns to the family of nations, we assure it of the fullest support and cooperation of the Pakistan delegation.

It is our hope that with the removal of this item from the agenda of the General Assembly we have left behind us - for ever - the pain and anguish of apartheid.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil): We meet today to salute the completion of the process of reintegration of South Africa into the family of nations, a process initiated less than one year ago, when the General Assembly decided to lift the economic sanctions then in place against that country. As we do so, we confirm our support for the huge strides of the South African people in their effort to rebuild their country on the basis of a democratic and non-racial State in which everyone is entitled to exercise full citizenship, regardless of the colour of their skin.

For far too many years a source of concern to the international community, the situation in South Africa has lately become a source of hope for all of us. It is also an example of the power of this Organization in the promotion of justice and peace and in the struggle against hatred and discrimination. This is one of those occasions when all of us can feel gratified. In this sense, I should like to pay a very special tribute to the work of the Special Committee against Apartheid, which directed and organized the activities of the United Nations in this field, and to its Chairman, Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari of Nigeria.

The Special Committee against Apartheid has successfully fulfilled its mandate and concluded its work after making a vital contribution in leading international efforts towards the complete elimination of apartheid.

But this historic moment would not have been possible without the heroism, the wisdom and the resiliency of the South African people, which, after having endured woeful hardship during so many years, gave the world a lesson in courage and political maturity in the process that led to the free and fair elections held last April. Such qualities, embodied in the very person of President Nelson Mandela - a man of destiny, courage and action - should constitute a source of inspiration for the whole world. South Africa has undoubtedly set an example, the positive effects of which we hope will be felt in other situations currently on the agenda of the United Nations.

The abhorrent system known as apartheid has been brought to an end, relegated for good to the dustbin of history where it justly belongs.

The new South Africa, free from the shackles of apartheid, is to be welcomed back - and we do so wholeheartedly - as a full and equal member of the international community. What seemed like a vision not so long ago has become a reality - a bright opportunity in a world that in many places and in many ways remains troubled by intolerance and discrimination. We all have reason to rejoice at the South African transition to racial democracy.

Today, after the triumph of the cause of freedom and equality in South Africa, a landmark victory for democracy and hope, a new era is indeed dawning for the region and the continent.

Brazil feels very close to southern Africa - not only in terms of geographical proximity but especially in view of the many and strong historical and cultural links that bound us to our neighbours on the other rim of the South Atlantic Ocean.

In this connection, we are particularly happy with the decision of the South African Government to participate in the international efforts to achieve peace

and stability in the subregion. This gesture bears witness to the maturity and sense of responsibility of the young South African democracy.

A few weeks ago we had the honour of welcoming Mr. Thabo Mbeki, First Executive Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa, who came to New York to participate in the meeting of the Security Council at which the restrictions imposed against the former regime in that country were eliminated. His presence at that meeting was a definite assurance that South Africa has at last entered a new phase in its history.

On that occasion I reaffirmed that Brazil, as a South Atlantic neighbour of South Africa, continues to look forward to the moment when South Africa will take its rightful place in the partnership of countries of the zone of peace and cooperation in the South Atlantic. My Government has also expressed its commitment to strengthening our ties with the new South Africa, and has reiterated its readiness to contribute to the huge tasks lying ahead in that country's reconstruction efforts, where the socio-economic disparities caused by apartheid need to be addressed.

We are glad and very proud to welcome the new united, democratic, non-racial South Africa back to this Organization, in its full capacity. We consider it most appropriate that this meeting is taking place with the participation of His Excellency Mr. Alfred Nzo, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of South Africa, whose presence in the seat rightly reserved for his country I have the pleasure to acknowledge.

Mr. Lamptey (Ghana): Thirty-two years ago the General Assembly took the momentous decision to set up the Special Committee against Apartheid to sensitize international opinion to the inhumanity of the obnoxious system of apartheid in South Africa. Even though apartheid was recognized as an institutionalized system of racism and discrimination that critically violated the principles of the Charter of our Organization, an effective strategy for its elimination had eluded the international community, particularly the principal organs of the United Nations.

The search for a response to the repugnant system became choked by, and intertwined with, other principles of the Charter. At one point discussions in the Assembly fell victim to filibustering, because to some the idea of the United Nations dealing with a practice within a "sovereign Member State" constituted interference in internal affairs. To others the South African situation represented a classical, though subtle and advanced, case of colonialism.

The nature and mode of the struggle to eliminate apartheid caused passionate and recriminatory discussions. While some tended to equate the struggle with terrorism, others glorified it as a liberation struggle. The heroic people of South Africa, however, marched on. Some suffered incarceration, and Robben Island gained instant notoriety. Others left home to continue the struggle from outside; still others found habitation outside the bright lights of the cities, towns and villages. For them, the night exchanged places with the day.

In the midst of this hesitation, uncertainty and confusion, the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid was born. The records of the United Nations serve as a perpetual reminder of how the Committee was established. Its membership, even to this day, reflects the lack of consensus, let alone unanimity, about how, even what, the international community wanted to do with apartheid - a practice the Organization had condemned as evil.

Today the General Assembly is meeting to draw the curtain on the Special Committee against Apartheid. The Committee, without doubt, has been a resounding success. It succeeded in keeping before the eyes of the world the infamy, injustice and the threat to international peace and security that the apartheid system in South Africa constituted. The liberation struggle became indelibly marked on our conscience through observances such as those in solidarity with the struggle of women in South Africa and with the struggling people of South Africa, and those for the elimination of racial discrimination in South Africa.

These by and in themselves are notable achievements, for which the Special Committee aainst Apartheid will and should be remembered. The 1989 adoption, without a vote, of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, however, immortalized the Committee as the legitimate vehicle through which the international community could and should assist in the elimination of apartheid in South Africa. The intense and extensive consultations that preceded the adoption of the draft resolution at the level of the Committee, involving non-members of the Committee, were a testimony to the ability of Member States to diligently search for a common platform, even in the face of strategic differences. The consensus, if not

unanimity, that characterized the adoption of the Declaration was an unequivocal statement by the international community that apartheid had to go, and had to go on the basis of clear conditions and strategies. In a sense, the Declaration was a turning point in the liberation struggle.

Today South Africa has rid itself of apartheid and returned in dignity to the comity of nations. Before the curtain is drawn, Ghana wishes to join in the standing ovation for the outstanding performance of the Special Committee against Apartheid. We offer special appreciation and gratitude to its Chairman, Ambassador Gambari of Nigeria, for the steadfastness with which he pursued the struggle. We also recall with gratitude the contributions of his predecessors. Our gratitude also goes to the Secretary-General and his staff, who provided excellent support services to the Special Committee against Apartheid.

Above all, we salute the indomitable spirit of the South Africans who prevailed over apartheid - those who struggled against it as well as those who gave it up. We wish President Nelson Mandela and the Government of National Unity success.

Finally, let me recall that at the very moment of the birth of his nation, Osagyefo Mr. Kwame Nkrumah issued the dictum that the independence of Ghana was meaningless unless it was linked to the total liberation of Africa. For the rest of his life he marshalled every resource in pursuit of this objective. And his heirs have never hesitated a moment in their practical commitment to carrying out the historic charge.

Thus, wherever rests the soul of Kwame Nkrumah today, the remarkable achievement of South Africa brings meaning to the independence of Ghana. All Africa sends a message to Osagyefo that the battle for African liberation is won. From North to South, East to West, freedom for the African people is secured. Let not the difficulties of the moment cloud this singular achievement, nor should we allow the vicissitudes of the future to strike fear and doubt in our hearts. For these also we shall overcome in triumph. Ethiopia shall arise!

Mr. Jerandi (Tunisia) *(interpretation from French):* Now that South Africa has moved towards a democratic and non-racial society, and now that there is a democratically elected executive body which reflects the concerns and hopes of the entire South African population, my country's delegation is pleased to join all those who have expressed their pleasure at seeing South Africa return to our Organization.

As a representative of the current President of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), I should like to say that my country was very honoured a few days ago to receive President Nelson Mandela, whose country had just made a triumphal entry into the pan-African organization in Tunis. We are convinced that the Republic of South Africa will be an influential member of the OAU and the United Nations and will make a tangible contribution to their activities.

President Nelson Mandela and his companions and colleagues have, by their wisdom, set a unique example in the history of humankind. What has just happened in South Africa teaches us a lesson in political philosophy and conduct: everything is possible with patience, perseverance and, above all, the good will of all the players on the political scene and their sincere faith in the future.

It gives us great satisfaction to see the South African people finally find the path of freedom and equality for all and enter a new era in which there will no longer be room for racial discrimination.

The South African leaders, in particular Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk, have played a crucial role in avoiding pitfalls and excesses and have thus ensured the success of the transitional period that preceded the elections in April 1994 and, now, of the period following those elections. Indeed, inspired by the desire to serve the common interest of all South Africans, they acted to promote a climate of harmony, confidence and national reconciliation. This great work, which they carried out with courage and determination, deserves our respect and our support. We are convinced that, under the wise and clear-sighted leadership of President Nelson Mandela, these efforts will continue to be made without interruption; this is demonstrated by the establishment of a Government which faithfully reflects the new political configuration that resulted from the democratic elections in April and which thereby can underpin national reconciliation and strengthen tolerance, stability and democracy.

In this solemn meeting, we cannot fail to stress the assistance lent by the international community to the struggle of the South African people. The Special Committee against Apartheid has fulfilled its mission very satisfactorily, and we take this opportunity to

congratulate its Chairman, Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari, and its other members on having contributed so effectively to the Committee's action.

The United Nations also took the initiative of imposing a variety of sanctions on the former South Africa, which greatly contributed to the isolation of the segregationist regime then in power. That is true also of the Organization of African Unity, which since its establishment has acted on behalf of the cause of the South African people by coordinating action taken by African States in this respect and by making the international community aware of this just cause.

As a founding member of the Organization of African Unity and as its current Chairman, Tunisia has always supported the struggle against apartheid, and expresses its pleasure at the recent entry of South Africa into the African organization in response to the desire of its people and all African peoples. Indeed, for the more than 30 years of its existence, the OAU has constantly worked to ensure that South Africa, free of the discriminatory system, could finally take its seat in the OAU and make its contribution to the building of Africa.

The advent of a democratic, united and non-racial South Africa is a factor favouring stability and prosperity both regionally and internationally.

During its participation in the thirtieth summit of the Organization of African Unity, held in Tunis from 13 to 15 June 1994, the South African delegation expressed the desire of the South African Government to contribute to the promotion of cooperation between African countries in all areas and to the common efforts to reduce hot-beds of tension and create fresh opportunities for the continent's economic and social development.

The commitment demonstrated by the leaders of South Africa to national reconciliation, the strengthening of the ongoing democratic process, and international cooperation in all areas shows that that country has embraced the purposes and principles of our Charter and that it now fully deserves to resume its rightful place in the family of nations.

Mr. Huaraka (Namibia): The people of South Africa, with resolute determination and steely courage, and aided and supported by the international community, have finally triumphed over the apartheid system. The victory of the people of South Africa over the most obnoxious and inhuman system of apartheid is a victory for humanity, human dignity and the worth of the human being. Today, the General Assembly stands ready to record in the annals of history this glorious achievement of mankind.

Obviously, it has been a long and difficult struggle, which has occupied the international community since the inception of the United Nations. As long ago as 20 November 1947, during the second session of the General Assembly, the Indian representative, Mrs. Pandit, launched a strong and total rejection of the apartheid system. She stated:

> "So long as the obnoxious principles embodied in the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act are adhered to, it will not be possible for India to have any kind of relations with South Africa. If the Union Government would suspend, even administratively, the operation of this Act, the Indian Government would, I am sure, be happy to suspend their decision regarding the breaking of trade relations with South Africa." *(A/PV.120, p. 1136)*

She went on to say:

> "For us, it is not the mere assertion of certain rights and privileges. We look upon it primarily as a challenge to our dignity and self-respect." *(ibid.)*

Since that time, the international community, year after year, in forum after forum, had condemned and rejected the apartheid system. The day was eagerly awaited when we could jubilantly welcome a non-racial and democratic South Africa into our midst. As remote as this might have seemed then and often since, finally, almost 50 years later, it has happened.

The successful end of our liberation struggle brought an end to the extended apartheid rule in Namibia. But when the flag of the new South Africa was hoisted on 10 May 1994, it marked the total eradication of apartheid.

We in Namibia are specially gratified to welcome the new South Africa into the fold of the community of nations. Yes, we have travelled that road; we have felt and suffered the anguish of apartheid. With the roots of apartheid still alive then, we in Namibia never lost sight of the stark reality that unless South Africa was free our own freedom and democracy were in jeopardy. It is therefore fitting for us to say to our South African

brothers and sisters: Congratulations and welcome. Finally, we have triumphed. Just as we struggled together against the apartheid rule, we look forward to working together to ensure development and prosperity for our people and our region.

Freedom in South Africa, like anywhere else, did not come without cost. There has been massive loss of lives not only in South Africa but, equally, in the entire region. In the front-line States, the wars of destabilization wreaked havoc, killed, maimed and destroyed. The number of orphans and disabled and the destroyed infrastructure in the region remain today the deep scars of apartheid destabilization. On the other hand, Africa at large, through the Organization of African Unity, spared no efforts in opening its doors to the victims of apartheid. The international community, especially the support groups, through the anti-apartheid movement, worked tirelessly for a South Africa free of apartheid. This was the price paid in order for us to rejoice today.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the indispensable role played by the United Nations, especially the Special Committee against Apartheid. As fatigue and pessimism crept in, the Committee kept the course. The role played by the Committee against Apartheid in the pre-election period and its mobilization efforts for a post-apartheid South Africa are commendable.

Indeed, we can never repay those who sacrificed for the democratic and non-racial South Africa. No amount of words will ever suffice to express our appreciation for those who made it happen. Namibia, however, has no doubt that the only meaningful way to honour all those who nourished this seed of freedom and democracy is for all of us to make democracy work in southern Africa - to touch the lives of those who have been kept by the apartheid system at the periphery of socio-economic development in their country. This must be our pledge.

When we welcome the new South Africa, we do so, among other reasons, in recognition of the beginning of a brighter future for southern Africa. As the apartheid system that sponsored and fanned destabilization in the entire region, causing havoc and destruction and spawning waves of refugees and displaced persons, has finally been done away with; the time for reconstruction and economic cooperation in the region has finally dawned.

It is our hope that the Southern African Development Community (SADC) will be in a better position to consolidate mutual economic cooperation and development for the prosperity of all the people in the region. The success of SADC will be the culmination of the political success of the eradication of apartheid. The member countries of SADC, in particular, must work for an atmosphere of peace, democracy and reconciliation to permeate the region.

It is in this context that Namibia welcomes the pronouncements of the leaders of South Africa, including today's by the Foreign Minister of South Africa, that South Africa stands ready to contribute to resolving the conflict, not only in our region - in Angola and Mozambique - but in the entire world. A stable and conflict-free SADC region holds great prospects for economic development for all the countries of the region, and in fact for the entire African continent.

Namibia is aware of the economic difficulties that lie ahead. The economic task confronting the new South Africa is daunting. The cost of the sins of apartheid is enormous. It is estimated that 53 per cent of South Africans live below the poverty line, while over 1 million children are malnourished. Thus, the structural imbalances and the inequities that result from decades of apartheid are gigantic. Apartheid, which was the most comprehensive programme of racial entitlement, must be replaced by affirmative action. To this end, assistance by the international community is indispensable. My delegation therefore concurs with the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Committee against Apartheid.

The President: We are facing a very practical problem. We have conference services only until 9 p.m. Unless we are able to accelerate the pace of our work and respect the five-minute rule laid out for us by the President of the Assembly, we shall have to reconvene on Monday morning. I am quite certain that that is not what representatives here present wish. All of us would therefore be grateful if the remaining speakers could adhere to the five-minute rule.

Mr. Musuka (Zambia): May I join preceding speakers in congratulating and welcoming back to the international community and, in particular, to the General Assembly the South African delegation to the United Nations, led by the Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Alfred Nzo.

My delegation has no doubt that the new South African delegation - new in the sense that it represents the post-apartheid and united, democratic and non-racial

South Africa - will play an active and positive role in the United Nations and its subsidiary organs for the benefit of all mankind.

The united, democratic and non-racial South African Government, under the able leadership of President Nelson Mandela, has moved fast, with the support of the international community, in reclaiming its rightful place in various international organizations. We are therefore happy that South Africa has joined the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Commonwealth of Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement.

My delegation is equally happy that, after four decades, the General Assembly is discussing the question of the elimination of apartheid and the establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa for the last time. The question of apartheid in South Africa has been on the international agenda for so long; throughout this period the United Nations has been unrelenting in its opposition to apartheid. It is therefore fitting that the arch-rival of apartheid, President Nelson Mandela, together with the international community represented in the General Assembly, should celebrate today the total elimination of apartheid in South Africa by resuming the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

The positive political developments in South Africa, followed by the appeals by Mr. Nelson Mandela, the President of the African National Congress of South Africa, persuaded the General Assembly to adopt resolution 48/1 of 8 October 1993 and thereby lift the sanctions against South Africa, except those relating to the arms embargo and nuclear matters, which had been imposed by the Security Council.

Following the 27 April 1994 election process, which ushered in a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa, and the inauguration of His Excellency Mr. Nelson Mandela as the State President of South Africa on 10 May 1994, the Security Council met on 25 May 1994 to consider the termination of the mandatory arms embargo imposed against South Africa by Security Council resolution 418 (1977) of 4 November 1977 and the subsequent Council resolutions 421 (1977), 558 (1984) and 591 (1986).

It is against this background that the General Assembly has resumed its forty-eighth Session to consider the report of the Special Committee against Apartheid (A/48/22/Add.1) and the report of the Secretary-General regarding the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa (A/48/523/Add.1).

With the coming into force on 27 April 1994 of South Africa's first non-racial and democratic Constitution and the holding from 26 to 29 April 1994 of the first non-racial elections, leading to a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa, and the subsequent assumption of the office of the State President by Mr. Nelson Mandela on 10 May 1994, apartheid came to an inevitable end.

The abolition of apartheid through the democratic elections in South Africa is a victory first of all for the democratic process and secondly for all South Africans regardless of race. The South Africans, together with the United Nations, the international community at large and the Special Committee against Apartheid, must be commended for the contributions they have made over several years to the efforts leading to the elimination of apartheid. We commend the United Nations, the Special Committee against Apartheid and the international community for the support they gave to all those South Africans who courageously fought against apartheid and suffered from it.

Equally commendable were the positive contributions the international community made to the political process in the negotiations and the electoral process through the presence and activities of observer missions in South Africa from the United Nations, the Commonwealth, the European Union, the Organization of African Unity and various non-governmental organizations, churches and individuals. The efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations deserve special mention and appreciation by the international community.

In my statement to the Security Council during its 25 May 1994 consideration of the termination of the mandatory arms embargo imposed against South Africa, I said that

> "The question of apartheid in South Africa, which was on the international agenda for more than four decades, is now dead, although its ugly scars may still show on the political, economic, and cultural face of South Africa for a few more years." *(S/PV.3379, p. 5)*

The socio-economic disparities caused by apartheid need to be urgently addressed to ensure the stable and

peaceful development of the united, non-racial and democratic South Africa. The marginalized majority under apartheid, now politically liberated, anxiously - and rightly - aspire to socio-economic emancipation. It is imperative that in the interim period from 1994 to 1999 the Government of South Africa should be relieved of some of its financial commitments so that it can concentrate its efforts on national reconstruction and the social development process, and can use all available resources to that end. My delegation is happy that the resolution just adopted has provision for the non-applicability to South Africa of Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations, relating to loss of voting rights in the General Assembly.

The system of apartheid having been brought to an end, the Special Committee against Apartheid established by the General Assembly on 6 November 1962 has fulfilled its mandate in accordance with the provisions of the relevant General Assembly resolutions, and in particular resolution 2671 (XXV) of 8 December 1970 and resolution S-16/1 of 14 December 1989 containing the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa. The Committee has diligently and successfully concluded its work.

I should also like to mention that my delegation appreciates the work that has been performed by the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa, which was established by the General Assembly in paragraph 2 of resolution 2054 B (XX) of 15 December 1965. However, in view of the new developments in South Africa, my delegation welcomes the Fund's recommendation to the General Assembly that, it having fulfilled its mandate, the remaining funds of the Trust Fund be transferred to the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa for use in its educational and training programmes in South Africa. The funds will go a long way to help develop human resources in South Africa.

My thanks go to Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, the Chairman of the Special Committee Against Apartheid, and his Committee for the excellent work they have done. My special thanks go also to Mr. Peter Osvald, Chairman of the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa, and his Committee for a well-accomplished mission.

Let me take this opportunity to reiterate that Zambia stands ready to work very closely with South Africa in pursuit of socio-economic development, bilaterally and at the regional and international levels.

The cherished goals of peace, freedom and justice that we share with the new South Africa inspired Zambia to support the freedom struggle.

Last, but not least, my delegation fully supports the appeal in the draft resolution to Member States and the international community generously to assist the Government and the people of South Africa in the implementation of the reconstruction and development programmes of that country.

Mr. Rai (Papua New Guinea): I am honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of the Government and people of Papua New Guinea at a time when the international community, with the close cooperation of the former South African Government and its peoples, has turned the page on the issue of apartheid. A new South Africa has been born, and we join previous speakers in welcoming the new South Africa into this Hall once again.

I cannot let such an opportunity pass without reaffirming my Government's warmest tribute to and admiration for the President of South Africa, Mr. Nelson Mandela, for his endurance, vision and courageous leadership.

I wish to make some brief points on agenda item 38, entitled: "Elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa", and the report of the Special Committee against Apartheid, which is before this Assembly.

We note with satisfaction the report of the Special Committee against Apartheid and commend the authors for an articulate and well-presented report, which informs the General Assembly of the many players and missions and of the various negotiations and conferences that have facilitated the establishment of a united and democratic South Africa.

The Special Committee against Apartheid deserves high praise for its active role in pursing its activities, often under extreme pressure and with limited resources. On this occasion, as the Committee is being dissolved, we offer our congratulations to the coordinating team, the bureau and the various members of the Committee, for the leadership which has brought new life for South Africans. The Committee may have completed its mandate, but as we know, "old habits die hard" and as a caution, we should continue all efforts to ensure that the last cells created by apartheid are once and for all

eliminated. What more evidence do we need than the historic elections and the proclamation of President *Mandela* that the Special Committee, together with the international community, including non-governmental organizations, has achieved a milestone in human history?

Since our independence, the Government of Papua New Guinea had consistently condemned the abhorrent system of apartheid and demonstrated its solidarity with the United Nations by banning all contact with racist South Africa. I am pleased to state that we have reviewed our policies on South Africa in the light of recent events, and Parliament has unanimously set in motion legislative action to effect the necessary changes.

We note with satisfaction comments made in the report on the multi-party negotiations, especially the active participation by all parties in preventing possible outbreaks of violence. We are pleased to see that the democratization of South Africa was obtained through a relatively peaceful process and that a sense of solidarity has been planted to take root in a more constructive and integrated way.

Peace for South Africa is peace for Africa and for the world. We congratulate the South African Government, the African National Congress, the Democratic Party, and all other important players who took an active part and an extensive role in the formation of the Transitional Executive Council.

We also congratulate the various committees of the United Nations for their contributions to the work of the Special Committee against Apartheid, including the Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, where we have always reaffirmed our strong opposition to apartheid.

The Special Committee against Apartheid is a success story of the United Nations in this century. This success is shared by many international organizations, the Commonwealth and individual South Africans, such as the former President of South Africa, Mr. F. W. de Klerk, for his commitment to the realization that the people of South Africa can have the same opportunities, share the same environment and have equal participation in the process of nation-building.

We share the concerns of many that a much heavier responsibility lies ahead in sustaining the freedom won, and undertaking the restructuring and restoration of social and economic development for South Africans within a democratic environment. We encourage the wishes of the leaders to establish regional mechanisms in South Africa to promote regional trade and economic development, and contribute to peace and security in the region. South Africa, with its existing infrastructure and resources, could play an important role in such a regional mechanism.

The western media can also play their part by adopting a more balanced attitude and by focusing on the many positive changes that are taking place in South Africa.

My Government supports action by the United Nations through its various agencies and organizations to increase development assistance to South Africa, and especially in bringing about employment opportunities for the deprived majority of its citizens.

Finally, we look forward to further collaboration with the new South Africa in our common endeavours to fulfill the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Remirez de Estenoz Barciela (Cuba) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: For South Africa, the April 1994 elections marked the end of centuries of injustice. For black Africa, they meant the culmination of an entire era of struggle for the liberation of the continent. For the world, it was the victory of a struggle that elicited unprecedented global support and demonstrated the capacity for action of the international community when it unites behind a just cause.

This political watershed opens up an optimistic chapter for the people of South Africa and the world as a whole after many years of tenacious and heroic struggle. It constitutes a triumph not only for the anti-apartheid movement but for all of Africa, the third world and all progressive forces around the world, which today hail and celebrate the historic victory of Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress.

On a day like today, we cannot overlook one crucial event in that epic. I refer to the military failures of a State that based its military potential on racism and aggression against neighbouring countries and that suffered a crushing defeat at Cuito Cuanavale, which, in conjunction with other internal and external factors, marked the irreversible decline of apartheid.

The sacrifice of the Angolan people, the struggle of the Namibian guerrillas of SWAPO and of so many other

African fighters offered decisive support for the victorious struggle of the heroic people of South Africa, obliging the apartheid regime to sit down at the negotiating table and give up its mad dream of a racist empire in southern Africa.

For Cuba, 300,000 of whose sons and daughters offered their modest support to the liberation of Africa, it is both an honour and a strict duty to contribute with our efforts to the reconstruction of a democratic South Africa.

Today, the United Nations, the Special Committee against Apartheid - and especially its Chairman, the Ambassador of Nigeria, His Excellency Mr. Ibrahim Gambari - and the international community can take just pride in the contibution they have made over the decades towards the elimination of apartheid. But important though that effort was, equally essential will be the measures that we adopt to contribute to the national reconstruction of the new South Africa.

Racial inequality, social injustice - in a word, the effects of the policy of apartheid over the years - created a critical situation in the economic and social spheres for the great majority in South Africa that today needs to be rectified.

Today the international community, consistent with its support for the process that put an end to apartheid, should extend to the new Government all the necessary cooperation to reach its aspirations for peace, harmony and progress. In our particular case, and despite the limitations that we are facing today, we are prepared to lend all the support we can, considering the tradition and experience that Cuba has in assisting our brotherly peoples in Africa.

With the end of apartheid, humanity achieved a beautiful victory. Let us all now help to consolidate it and to turn it into a symbol of international cooperation for the sake of the future of the heroic people of South Africa.

The President: Again, I should like to appeal to delegations to be as brief as possible to allow us to complete the proceedings as planned.

Mr. Bangura (Sierra Leone): A month ago, the Security Council took a major decision in terminating the sanctions and other measures that it had imposed against the then-apartheid Government of South Africa. It was done in the wake of that country's transformation into a united, democratic and non-racial society, following the results of its first pluralistic general elections. That decision closed a chapter in the long and painful struggle to bring an end to a racist practice that had been universally condemned.

Today, we are meeting to close still yet another significant chapter - this time, in the work of this Assembly. Our meeting today is to witness a procedure that is phoenix-like: in bringing to an end the work of the Special Committee against Apartheid, the participation of South Africa in the work of this Assembly must now resume on the former's ashes.

In this connection, I should like, on behalf of the Sierra Leone delegation, to welcome to this Assembly His Excellency Mr. Alfred Nzo, Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa, who is leading his delegation on this special occasion that will mark the end of his country's 20-year suspension from our midst. His presence in this Hall is a testimony not only to the courage of all South Africans in surmounting the catastrophe which threatened many times to engulf their country, but also an affirmation of the faith of all of us in the enduring validity of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

In many ways, many of us must feel a sense of pride and achievement that this ceremony is taking place at all: pride that the international community stayed the course; achievement, in that the results have vindicated our faith in and commitment to immutable principles.

When in 1962 the General Assembly established, at its seventeenth regular session, the subsidiary organ that was later to become the Special Committee against Apartheid, after two name changes, few thought that it would take a generation to resolve the question with which it was vested. Indeed, it is noteworthy that roughly 40 per cent of the present membership of this Organization had not yet been admitted and therefore took no part in the adoption of resolution 1761 (XVII), which gave life to the Special Committee. This notwithstanding, they would later add the weight of their support to the anti-apartheid effort in the ensuing three decades.

Yet, though 30-odd years may pale in the life-spans of nations or organizations, we as a delegation are tempered by the realization that many in South Africa who fought and died in the struggle against apartheid never lived to see their thirtieth birthday. This, indeed, is a sobering thought, but it is also an uplifting one:

what we are accomplishing here today proves that their sacrifice was not in vain.

The Special Committee against Apartheid will occupy a special place in the annals of this Organization for its persistence and for its dedication to the cause of those millions who were discriminated against and stripped of their dignity and humanity. During those long years when the road to freedom for millions in South Africa became narrower with numerous obstacles, and some among us wavered, questioning the continuing relevance of the Committee's work of organizing observances, days of solidarity, commemorative ceremonies and other events, the Special Committee kept alive an issue that some felt should have been allowed to take its normal course.

My delegation believes that, through those activities and with the participation in its work of the national liberation movements, non-governmental organizations and eminent personalities, a forum was created by the Special Committee in which the economic and socio-political contradictions and imbalances of apartheid were critically examined in a rational and civilized manner. An atmosphere was established in which not only were solutions to the odious policy of apartheid presented, but its victims' fears and aspirations were given voice and its practitioners were, in time, brought face-to-face with the inevitable and self-destructive consequences of their pursuit of that policy.

We in Sierra Leone have no doubt that the vigour with which the Special Committee discharged its mandate, even in the face of its detractors, contributed in no small measure to saving countless lives which would have been lost had the resolution of the question of apartheid been brought about by other than peaceful means. To its members, but more so to its Chairman, Nigeria, we say: "Well done! Yours has not been an enviable task." No doubt, today's meeting might have taken place years sooner had the circumstances in the ensuing years been different. We will never know for sure. That is now for historians to ponder.

In a similar vein, my delegation wishes to express its appreciation to the Committee of Trustees of the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa for the responsible manner in which it executed the Trust Fund since its establishment in 1965. We have noted with satisfaction the valuable contribution it also made to the anti-apartheid effort.

In its final report, the Special Committee gives a very detailed account of the political developments in South Africa during the period November 1993 to 10 June 1994, stretching from the establishment of South Africa's transitional institutions, through the first democratic, multi-party elections, to the installation of the Government of National Unity. The Committee went further to undertake a review of the socio-economic situation in South Africa, especially the broad challenges that need to be confronted in the post-apartheid period in order to secure the foundations of its young non-racial society.

We are in agreement with the report's conclusions and recommendations, in particular the urgent need for the international community to ensure that the stable development of South Africa is not compromised through failure to address the legacy of socio-economic disparity left behind by apartheid. No doubt, this final report - perhaps more than any other in the Special Committee's life - will in time become an icon in the United Nations archives, because not only does it symbolize the determination of a people to eliminate a hateful policy, but will become a source of inspiration for those who, confronted by similar challenges in the future, may draw courage from the fact that they will not be alone in their own struggle.

If anything, the international community must draw the appropriate conclusions from the life and times of the Special Committee against Apartheid - that, regardless of national interests, we, as an Organization, cannot afford to sacrifice principles on which the foundations of civilized society are anchored for the comfort of political expediency. We can do no greater disservice to struggling people in other parts of our world than to lead them to believe that our Charter's promise holds true for some but not for others. Even as we meet today, we see the results around us of our collective failure to be unambiguous, inflexible and uncompromising in the face of injustice.

In conclusion, it is in this regard that the termination of the work of the Special Committee against Apartheid, following the successful completion of its mandate, should embolden us in our continuous search for solutions to other problems that beset our world. It shows that with patience, commitment and a clear sense of purpose the international community can bring hope and change even in the most intractable of situations.

Mr. Malone (Canada): I am pleased to speak today on the occasion of the reassumption of its seat by the Republic of South Africa. It is indeed a great day for South Africa and for the United Nations - a great day for South Africa, since all its people are finally represented here in the heart of the community of nations; a great day for the United Nations, as one of its founding principles is that of self-determination and another victory has been won in that battle. But it is also a very proud day for Canada.

Canada has long been in the forefront of those working for change in South Africa. We led the Commonwealth, through the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers Committee, in the imposition of sanctions against South Africa. We were stout supporters of all United Nations initiatives for South Africa. Over the years, we have lent material and moral support to the democratic movement. More recently, we spent over $5 million in support of the South African election, providing essential technical assistance to the Independent Electoral Commission, to voter education programmes and to the United Nations Trust Fund for the South African election. During the election, there were over 170 Canadians present as electoral observers, including 12 who were members of the official Canadian observation team, led by our Secretary of State for Latin America and Africa, the Honourable Christine Stewart, and 55 with the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa.

(*spoke in French*)

We know that the transition to democracy does not end with an election. South Africa has made nearly miraculous progress in the past five years and deserves the heartfelt congratulations and admiration of the rest of the world. But there is much still to do. Indeed, while the pillars of apartheid are gone, its legacy remains. Canada is committed to supporting the ongoing process of change in South Africa. We will continue our programme of assistance to South Africa, but now in consultation with the Government of South Africa as well as other donors. Canada supported the early return of South Africa to the Commonwealth and we are looking forward to hosting the South African team when it participates in the Commonwealth Games to be held this August in Victoria. Canada will exert every effort in this Organization and others to help the people of South Africa earn the rewards of their long, costly and patient struggle.

Canadians stand in frank admiration of the people of South Africa, who have overcome years of hatred, fear and intolerance to achieve through patient negotiation and compromise a revolution more radical, more permanent and more all-pervasive than anyone could ever hope to achieve through warfare. The lesson of South Africa is one from which we can all learn. Today, as they regain their seat in the United Nations, Canada looks forward to working with South Africans as they re-enter the world community and share with us the vision and wisdom that have brought them so far.

Mr. Muthaura (Kenya): From 26 to 29 April 1994, the people of South Africa and the international community witnessed and indeed celebrated the first democratic and non-racial elections in South Africa, culminating in the election of Nelson Mandela as President of the Republic and the establishment of a democratic and united, non-racial South Africa. This marked the end of a long and arduous struggle by the people of South Africa against the oppressive and loathsome regime of apartheid.

The demolition of apartheid is a testimony to the age-old philosophy that nothing can stop a people fighting for equality and freedom. The apartheid regime in South Africa had erected over many decades a monstrous infrastructure backed by legal, administrative and military machinery which very few people believed could be dismantled this year. There is no doubt however, that this almost impossible feat could not have been achieved without the determination of the South African people and the concerted efforts of the international community. In that regard, the United Nations played a vital role in the struggle for the demolition of apartheid. The Special Committee against Apartheid, which was established on 6 November 1962, performed a splendid task and I wish to take this opportunity to pay a tribute to that Committee and, in particular, to Ambassador Ibrahim A. Gambari of Nigeria, who served as its last President. It is with delight and a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment that the United Nations should now abolish that Committee and remove from the agenda of its forty-ninth session the item entitled "Elimination of apartheid and the establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa", since the mandate of the Special Committee has been successfully concluded.

Last month the Security Council by its resolution 919 (1994) lifted all the remaining sanctions against South Africa. The resolution paved the way for this solemn occasion marking the seating of South Africa in the General Assembly for the first time since 1974. We wish to take this opportunity to welcome the united, democratic and non-racial South Africa as it returns to its

seat as a full-fledged Member of the United Nations and to play its rightful role with the international community in the search for solutions to many problems that still bedevil the human race. Kenya pledges its full cooperation with South Africa in the work of the Assembly. We from the African region have also been delighted to welcome South Africa to the Organization of African Unity, an organization that has fought untiringly for the total emancipation of Africa. With the elimination of apartheid, the long process of decolonization is now complete. However, many challenges still lie ahead. The difficulties being experienced by African countries, including the crisis in Somalia and Rwanda, are but painful reminders that political emancipation is not the panacea for all problems. The largest and most difficult struggle is usually for socio-economic development, particularly the eradication of poverty and improvement of the standards of living of people.

In South Africa itself, the immediate challenge for President Nelson Mandela and his Government is the improvement of the quality of life of the South African people. This requires bold measures to correct the socio-economic imbalances created by the apartheid system in the country over the years. The continued support of the international community in this regard will be vital.

We are, however, confident that the new Government of South Africa under President Mandela is best equipped to meet these challenges. President Mandela epitomizes the struggle for freedom. His calmness, his wisdom, his spirit of inclusiveness and accommodation, his magnanimity and his capacity to forgive and forget are some of his most admirable qualities.

Former President Frederik de Klerk has also carved out a place for himself as a statesman of rare abilities and vision. With him now serving as one of the Deputy Presidents of the Republic, we are indeed convinced that South Africa has a bright future. The South African experience will continue to serve as an important lesson to the United Nations as well as individual Member States in dealing with difficult situations relating to national and international conflicts.

We should however not fail to remind ourselves on this occasion that, although apartheid has now been abolished, many forms of racial discrimination, including xenophobia, still exist, and we are greatly concerned that these evils have been gathering momentum in some parts of the world. The United Nations should therefore not rest until all these forms of discrimination and the appendages of apartheid are completely eradicated.

In conclusion, we welcome the report of the Special Committee contained in document A/48/22/Add.1, as well as the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa (A/48/523/Add.1). We also welcome the adoption by the Assembly this morning of draft resolutions A/48/L.58 and A/48/L.59.

Mr. Bissember (Guyana): It is with a feeling of immense pride and satisfaction that I speak today on behalf of the Government of Guyana, to welcome the delegation of the new, democratic and non-racial South Africa to this resumed session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Our pride is equally great, with the knowledge that through the collective efforts and persistence of the international community we have now witnessed the end of the unjust system of apartheid, epitomized by the holding of internationally supervised elections under the principle of universal adult suffrage.

Since the 1950s the present governing party in Guyana, under the leadership of Mr. Cheddi Jagan, has given positive and consistent support to the anti-apartheid struggles of the African National Congress. The people of Guyana have also been deeply committed to the liberation of South Africa and, through various groups and non-governmental organizations, had expressed their condemnation against the system of apartheid.

The attendance of His Excellency President Cheddi Jagan at the inauguration of His Excellency President Nelson Mandela on 10 May 1994 was therefore an expression of the high tribute of the Government and people of Guyana to the Government and people of South Africa, as they begin a new era of peace, justice and progress in the future. All of this has of course been made possible only by the triumph of democracy.

My delegation would like to acknowledge in particular, the most valuable role played by the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa, in the conclusion of the National Peace Accord, in monitoring the elections and also in coordinating the efforts of the observer missions of the Organization of African Unity, the Commonwealth and the European Union. In addition, Guyana would like on this occasion to record its appreciation for the important role and achievements of the Special Committee against Apartheid. The efforts of this Committee were untiring in the creation of the

objective conditions for the evolution of the extant political system.

As we look forward, with the Government and people of South Africa, to the future, my delegation wishes to assure the delegation of South Africa of our support and cooperation in this and other forums. We are conscious that this is the time for consolidating hard-won democracy and setting about the task of national reconstruction, for the economic and social development of all the people of South Africa. In this, Guyana and South Africa have common experiences. It is therefore with a sense of anticipation that we regard the important international cooperation which the United Nations can facilitate in meeting our common objectives.

Mr. Li Zhaoxing (China) *(interpretation from Chinese)*: Today the United Nations declares to the world the demise of the diabolical system of apartheid and warmly welcomes a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa back to the international community. On behalf of the Chinese Government and people, I wish to extend warm congratulations to the South African Government and the South African people.

In April this year, the first non-racial general election in the history of South Africa was held. His Excellency Mr. Nelson Mandela was elected as the new President of South Africa. That was the result of the protracted and arduous struggles waged by the South African people. This historic victory marks the birth of a new South Africa, thus freeing the South African people from the shackles of apartheid, which had been in existence for 300 years, and opening a brilliant new chapter in the annals of the civilization of Africa and the world as a whole.

Over the years, the international community, and especially the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and African countries, have done a great deal of work and played a positive role in completely eliminating the policy of apartheid in South Africa. The victory of the South African people is therefore a victory of the international community as well. It is particularly worth mentioning here that the Special Committee against Apartheid has made tireless efforts over the decades to help the South African people achieve their noble objectives. It has successfully fulfilled the historic mission entrusted to it by the international community. We wish to express our respect and our congratulations on its outstanding contributions and remarkable achievements.

All along, the Chinese Government and people have firmly stood by the South African people in their just cause of combating apartheid and striving for racial equality and democratic rights, and have supported the peace process in South Africa. China is willing to establish and develop friendly relations and cooperation with the new South Africa on the basis of the United Nations Charter and the five principles of peaceful coexistence. We are confident that, under the leadership of President Mandela, the South African people, having won their freedom, will surely build their country into one of racial equality, peace, stability and prosperity, and will contribute their share to peace and development in Africa and the world as a whole, and to human civilization.

Mr. Kharrazi (Islamic Republic of Iran): This morning, in a historic meeting, the General Assembly accepted the credentials of the delegation of the new democratic, non-racial South Africa, officiating at the turning of one of the last pages in the dark and painful chapter of apartheid, which had for decades preoccupied the international community and the United Nations. It is a source of great satisfaction to see South Africa regaining its rightful place in the family of nations and to welcome the Foreign Minister of South Africa and his delegation in our midst in this universal body.

Last April, the world witnessed a turning point in the history of a nation, when the South African people freely expressed their collective aspiration to a better future and their determination to ensure a life of dignity, equality and freedom for every man and woman in their country. The people of South Africa finally succeeded through years of struggle and perseverance, in terminating decades of minority racist domination; today we salute and congratulate them on a most magnificent and historic victory over racial discrimination.

For more than four decades, the United Nations system played a leading role in mobilizing international opinion against apartheid, and contributed to the positive changes in South Africa. In this regard, the General Assembly repeatedly expressed its solidarity with and support for the people of South Africa. The adoption of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa at the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly was a historic decision which indeed prepared the ground for today's deliberations on removing the consideration of the question of apartheid from our agenda.

Immediately after the victory of the Islamic revolution in 1979, the Islamic Republic of Iran severed the rather extensive economic and diplomatic ties which had existed with the racist regime in Pretoria, and took a firm stand against apartheid by supporting the people of South Africa in their struggle for the elimination of apartheid and racism.

We have recently established diplomatic relations with the Government of National Unity in South Africa, and are eager to expand our trade and economic ties with the new South Africa. The Government of National Unity has to meet the challenge of development, particularly in disadvantaged areas of the country, and the international community, along with the specialized bodies of the United Nations, should address the requirements of the Government of South Africa in this enormous task.

Apartheid in South Africa is now relegated to history, but racial discrimination continues to prevail in some other parts of the world. We believe the dismantling of apartheid can be considered as an appropriate model for finding lasting solutions to those crises.

In closing, on behalf of the people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I would like to extend once more our sincere congratulations to the people and Government of South Africa on the return of South Africa to the family of nations.

Mr. Samassekou (Mali) *(interpretation from French):* It was with deep emotion and indescribable pride that we welcomed the advent of the new democratic, united South Africa and, thus, the complete liberation of the African continent.

We welcome that historic event. For all Africa, it was the culmination of a determined struggle that was among the highest priorities set by the peoples of Africa when, following independence, they established the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

But, beyond the continent's strong determination, what we must hail is the courageous struggle of the South African people, an unswerving struggle built upon sacrifice, a struggle it waged unwaveringly for years, during which it sacrificed its finest progeny to the ideals of freedom and justice.

As we pay a tribute to those thousands of children whose supreme sacrifice helped liberate their country, we do not forget that the sacrifice would have been in vain without the comprehension, support and assistance of the international community. We are glad that right has prevailed over the arbitrary and the absurd.

At the end of several decades of heroic struggle and many exemplary sacrifices undertaken for freedom, justice and democracy, the people of South Africa, headed by such great leaders as President Nelson Mandela, have proved once again - and history will record this - that nothing and no one can prevent a people from acceding to sovereignty, freedom and progress. The wheel of history turns because each people always produces great personages, whose courage, lofty vision and far-sightedness show them the road ahead, which is long and difficult but also wide and sure, and which alone leads to the happiness of the people in a life of honour and dignity.

My delegation pays a tribute to the great men of the recent history of the South African people, gathered together in a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa - Frederik Willem de Klerk and President Nelson Mandela. It also pays a tribute to all the brave and unconquerable freedom fighters for their patriotism, heroism and stoicism.

Finally, my delegation welcomes and associates itself with all the South African men, women and children who are today rightfully tasting the fruits of their struggle, which took the lives of so many worthy and immortal martyrs. Faith in their rights, in justice and in African and international solidarity ensured the great and certain victory of law and morality, the invincible weapons of oppressed peoples.

My delegation takes this opportunity to recall with pride the constant, active and positive participation of all the peoples of Africa in the struggle and the suffering of their South African brothers in their battle with apartheid, an immoral scourge unanimously condemned by our Organization and all international bodies. These organizations for decades spared no effort in condemning and weakening, by sanctions of various kinds, the racist minority regime which has today been definitively buried. Thus, the whole of the international community, through the joint actions of the peoples and States of which it is composed, have participated decisively in the struggle to liberate this African land.

Mali's contribution, constant and tireless since 1960, has been expressed through political, moral and material support and through the training of African freedom

fighters struggling for justice. The people and the Government of Mali have only done their duty as an African people and country.

Africa and the international community welcome the new South Africa into their midst with joy and eagerness. Having become the fifty-third member State of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on 23 May 1994, the Republic of South Africa is now a free fraternal State whose demographic power, economic potential and technical and scientific capacity are important factors that can contribute to promoting inter-African cooperation.

Real dialogue and effective partnership supported by mutually advantageous regional and sub-regional cooperation with the rest of Africa should be established as soon as possible in view of the great need for this. Establishing such a politically and economically diversified partnership will be to the advantage of the whole of Africa.

South Africa will play a valuable role that will benefit all its partners if it receives the appropriate assistance to that end. The time has indeed come for the United Nations and all its Member States to replace the various sanctions against South Africa with investments in all areas, and for the resolutions on prohibition to be finally replaced with resolutions on economic, financial, cultural and other forms of intervention. It is the duty of the United Nations and the international community to give a second chance to this second liberation of South Africa so that it will have every opportunity to succeed. If South Africa enjoys freedom, unity, stability and prosperity, the same can be true of other peoples and States in the subregion such as Angola and Mozambique, whether other tragedies are being played out.

Democracy is new in South Africa. It is a prerequisite for the survival of peace, security and development in that country and its neighbours, in Africa, and, finally, in the international community. The efforts and the various forms of aid given over the last few decades to South Africa should not be squandered. This fraternal country should, as a result, regain its seat not only in the General Assembly but also in all the other agencies of the United Nations system.

Massive bilateral and multilateral development aid must be given by all States, the United Nations and other international organizations. The United Nations must continue to be South Africa's chief support.

My delegation is gratified at the official establishment, on 16 May 1994, of diplomatic relations between the Government of Mali and the Government of South Africa. As in the past, my delegation will offer its unswerving support for and its active cooperation with any initiative and resolution aimed at giving the fraternal people and friendly Government of South Africa all the assistance they need finally to give concrete form to their noble motto - which could also be that of the United Nations - "Freedom and power to the people".

Africa has concluded a struggle: the liberation of a continent. It pursued the struggle in the conviction that it was just. It was certainly not easy, but its outcome was certainly inevitable, based as it was on moral and human values.

But, unfortunately, Africa is pursuing another struggle, a much more difficult and harsh one: its economic liberation. This is a battle for its development, a fight for its survival. Unlike the former struggle for political freedom, this struggle, in the view of some, cannot be based on moral values. It takes place in the face of selfish and unavowed motives and the commercial considerations of another age, which should be denounced since the interdependence of nations and a certain responsibility which some nations bear towards others for damage that has been inflicted demand real international solidarity, solidarity between the peoples and nations of the world.

This fight for survival requires the full attention of the international community. The international community must transfer the close attention it gave to the struggle which has just ended to this other challenge, which involves the whole of humankind.

Africa needs the rest of the international community more than ever before. Its economic plight is deeply disturbing, and it is being torn apart by conflict. Africa needs not substantial but massive assistance for its development. Only assistance of that kind, similar to that received by other parts of the world, can help to develop. The appalling conflicts and wars on that continent that we are now seeking to mitigate or suppress are the consequences of its lack of development. So long as this situation continues, so will the conflicts and wars. They are the logical consequence of this disastrous economic situation. If we want the conflicts and wars, with their accompanying desolation, to stop, we must attack the real problem; the solution to it is within our grasp if we really wish to solve it.

We need a jump-start. We must act before it is too late. The risk is there, and it is real. Let us show the will to face up to it.

Mr. Butler (Australia): The elections held in South Africa in April and the inauguration of Mr. Nelson Mandela as State President on 10 May 1994 represented a historic turning point, not only for South Africans but for the world. A system of government based on racial tyranny and oppression surrendered power to a Government which draws its legitimacy from all the people of South Africa.

The credit for this great transformation lies with the South African people, many of whom spent, or gave up, their lives in the struggle for democracy, justice and freedom. As the Prime Minister of Australia, the Honourable Paul Keating, said in a statement following the elections, it was the spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness shown by all parties, especially those who were victims of apartheid, which made these elections so remarkable.

The patience and determination of the victims of apartheid over the decades of oppression and their commitment to a peaceful, non-recriminatory transition to non-racial democracy have been and should continue to be an example and source of inspiration to us all, particularly as we struggle to address the many instances of subnational ethnic and other tensions which exist in the international community today.

The international community has also played its part in ending apartheid and in ensuring a peaceful transition process. Australia is proud to have played a significant role in formulating policy towards South Africa in both the United Nations and the Commonwealth over the past three decades. Australia is also proud to have been able to assist the peaceful transition to democracy in South Africa through contributions to the United Nations and Commonwealth electoral assistance programmes and to institution-building in South Africa.

Australia is well aware of the enormous task faced by the Government of National Unity in South Africa in redressing the economic and social inequalities that are the legacy of apartheid. South Africa will not be able to meet this challenge alone. We have welcomed the decision of leading donors to increase their economic assistance to South Africa.

Australia will increase its assistance to South Africa by 35 per cent to 30 million Australian dollars over the next three years in programmes which, building on and consolidating earlier Australian assistance initiatives, will aim to foster nation-building and skills development, and also enable the development of new programmes in the vitally important area of providing basic needs and infrastructure for the underprivileged majority, which was so grossly disadvantaged for so long.

We warmly welcome South Africa's return to full membership of the international community, as is now reflected by its reseating in this Assembly and in other international bodies. We are confident that South Africa will be able to play a new and increasingly important role, providing leadership not only on the African continent but in the Indian Ocean region and, more generally, in the global community.

It could be said that this re-entry, today, of a South African delegation into this Hall is a formality, following the recent historic events in South Africa. But it is a most glorious formality, one with which Australia is happy and honoured to be associated.

All Australians extend greetings and friendship to the people and Government of South Africa on this truly great occasion, and we will work with them as a partner.

Mr. McKinnon (New Zealand): Today is a very special day for this Assembly. It marks the end of a long and arduous process for the United Nations, for today we have welcomed into our ranks the representatives of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa, able to exercise all the prerogatives of membership of the United Nations and to carry all the responsibilities and obligations of that membership, on an equal footing with the other 183 Members of this Organization.

The elimination of apartheid became, over 30 years, one of the defining issues of the United Nations. The United Nations, through the actions of this Assembly and of its Special Committee against Apartheid, kept alive the possibility and hope that apartheid would be eliminated and that all peoples in South Africa would be able to enjoy political freedom in their own land. We thank the Special Committee and its Chair, Ambassador Gambari of Nigeria, for their work, now brought to a successful completion.

That work was undertaken on behalf of the disenfranchised people of South Africa. It is those people who have won the victory. It is their courage and tenacity that have earned our admiration and the

admiration of the people of New Zealand. We congratulate the Government of National Unity and the people of South Africa for the largely peaceful manner in which they accomplished the task of transforming their country into the new South Africa we welcome today. We wish them well in their continued endeavours to overcome the tainted legacy of apartheid.

New Zealand has already welcomed South Africa back to the Commonwealth. Now, on behalf of the Government and people of New Zealand, I take great pleasure in welcoming South Africa back to the United Nations. We look forward to working constructively with its Government, with its representatives to this Organization and in other international gatherings, in pursuit of our common objectives.

Mr. Gelber (United States of America): Mr. President, in response to your repeated appeals, I shall be brief. To paraphrase President Lincoln: the world will little note nor long remember what I say here, but it will never forget what the people of South Africa have achieved.

Today's vote is timely reaffirmation of the dramatic changes that have taken place in South Africa - changes that this Organization and the international community helped bring about. We all rejoice that the nightmare of apartheid has ended, and non-racial democracy has emerged in South Africa. We welcome South Africa to the family of democracies.

My Government strongly and unequivocally supported this resolution, which called for South Africa to resume its General Assembly seat in good standing. Yet my Government's support for this resolution should not be interpreted as an endorsement of the General Assembly's 1974 decision to expel South Africa.

The dramatic developments in South Africa in the last several years give encouragement to all who hope for reconciliation, equality and justice throughout the world. The stalemate and recrimination of the past have given way to a new spirit of tolerance and promise for the future. That South Africa today has moved peacefully to the next stage of its democratic development is great testimony to the courage and perseverance of the South African people and their leaders. All South Africans can be proud of these achievements. To them I say: "Your concerns were always present in these halls; your voices were heard; your needs addressed; your struggle appreciated. Others in other lands are engaged in painful endeavours for human betterment. They now reach out to you as you reached out to them." We know your response will be generous.

This is an historic moment in the United Nations relationship with South Africa. The international community and the people of South Africa are united in the goal of ensuring that South Africa becomes an active and positive member of the community of democratic States. The United States joins the United Nations in celebrating this achievement.

Mr. Mwambulukutu (United Republic of Tanzania): Tanzania has always looked forward to the day when South Africa would resume its full participation in the work of the United Nations General Assembly. Happily, that day has arrived. This Assembly has today voted by consensus to return a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa to the community of world nations.

This process is most welcome because it rewards the resounding victory scored by the protracted struggle to eradicate apartheid in South Africa. The General Assembly, where internecine debates on the question of apartheid have taken place with a number of resolutions adopted, bears full witness to the arduous road which the people of South Africa have had to traverse.

It is also interesting to note that, in the recent past, the very nature of the debate in this Assembly, the number and content of the resolutions adopted, and the voting pattern of Member States on the resolutions on apartheid have been changing accordingly. Last December, during the debate on item 38, my delegation noted that, at the height of apartheid in the 1980s, the number of political resolutions adopted by the General Assembly ranged from eight to 12. In 1992, the number dropped to five. Last year the Assembly was called upon to adopt only two such resolutions. Today the Assembly, under your able presidency, Sir, has pronounced apartheid dead and buried and has put to rest the consideration of the question of apartheid.

This is a clear illustration of the consensus over developments which were taking place in South Africa in line with the profound and irreversible changes envisaged in the 1989 Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa. This profound transformation was largely assisted by the magnanimous resolve of the leader of the African National Congress (ANC), Mr. Mandela, who is now the first President of democratic South Africa, and of those in the Government

of F. W. de Klerk and others who finally opted for a peaceful settlement in the context of the multi-party negotiating process. The process was further assured by the agreement reached on an Interim Constitution and the establishment of the Independent Electoral and Media Commissions, the Independent Broadcasting Authority, and the Transitional Executive Council. These developments were instrumental in bringing South Africa to the last stage of the dismantling of apartheid, leading to the successful conclusion of the first non-racial elections in April and the installation of the first non-racial Government of National Unity on 10 May 1994.

At this moment of celebration, my delegation congratulates all the people of South Africa for persevering in the struggle to consign apartheid and minority rule in their country to the dump heap of history. It is through the tenacity of the liberation movement that it was also possible to marshal international support for the struggle against apartheid. Tanzania is grateful to have been a part of this effort as it worked within the framework of the Organization of African Unity, in particular the front-line States, chaired by Zimbabwe, the Non-Aligned Movement and the United Nations. Tanzania therefore views the liberation of South Africa as its own liberation and that of our own continent.

We take due note of the presence in this Assembly Hall of South African Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Alfred Nzo, whose statement reflected very positively the new mood in post-apartheid South Africa. Special mention must also be made of the Special Committee against Apartheid, whose steadfast recommendations to this Assembly have tremendously influenced developments in South Africa. It is on the basis of the Committee's reports and the draft resolution adopted by the General Assembly today that Member States have not only formalized South Africa's return to the United Nations, but have also brought the Committee's mandate to a successful conclusion. There is a great deal for which to commend the work of the Committee under the chairmanship Professor Ibrahim Gambari of Nigeria.

In commending the international community as a whole for its contribution to the search for solutions to the problems of apartheid, Tanzania believes that the adoption of the resolution today will not only release South Africa for participation in United Nations activities, but will also embolden the capacity of the new multi-racial Government to redress the legacy of apartheid, facing squarely up to the demands for national reconciliation and reconstruction as well as exploring in peace the new vistas for links with its immediate neighbours and the world at large.

Mr. Sidorov (Russian Federation) *(interpretation from Russian):* First, on behalf of the Russian delegation, I welcome in our midst the delegation of South Africa, led by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Nzo.

The Russian Federation considers the conclusion of the process of eliminating apartheid in South Africa and that country's transition to a non-racial democratic society as an extremely important event, not only for that country but also for the entire African continent and the international community as a whole. Today, we can say with satisfaction that the goal towards which we have all striven for decades has finally been achieved. An epochal event has occurred in South Africa: the first general elections in its history, marking the triumph of common human values over the inhuman system of apartheid. Russia, which unswervingly supported all the constructive efforts for democratic reform of the Government parties and public organizations of the Republic of South Africa, shares with everyone a sense of profound satisfaction with the results of these efforts, which led to the elimination of the system of apartheid.

This success was the result, primarily, of the many years of selfless struggle of the democratic forces of South Africa, led by the African National Congress (ANC) and supplemented over the past few years by matching efforts from the reform wing of the former ruling elite of South Africa. In this connection, I should like once again to pay tribute to the personal courage, political will and realism of the outstanding statesmen of South Africa, the 1993 winners of the Nobel Peace Prize, Mr. Mandela and Mr. de Klerk, who, for the sake of the present and future of their country, managed to overcome the burden of racial and other prejudices and actively and purposefully pursued the task of eliminating apartheid through peaceful means.

The achievement of that noble task was made possible to a great extent by the energetic and consistent action of the United Nations - its Security Council, the General Assembly and the Special Committee against Apartheid - and of individual States and the international community as a whole. They can be rightly proud of the substantial contribution they made to the many years of intense struggle to dismantle the system of apartheid and to create the basis for South Africa's transition to a

non-racial and democratic society with equal rights guaranteed to all its citizens.

We cannot help but note the extremely positive role which was played in ensuring the success of the complex internal negotiating process in South Africa, and also during the holding of free and fair elections in the country, by the Observer Missions of the United Nations, the Commonwealth and the European Union and by the Organization of African Unity and many non-governmental and public organizations.

The gratitude of the international community goes also to the Secretary-General for his energetic efforts to implement the mandates entrusted to him in this connection by the Security Council and the General Assembly.

We are sure that the peoples of South Africa will see opening before them favourable prospects for harmonious political, social and economic development. Success in this area will depend to a great extent on the readiness of all the political forces of the country to engage in constructive interaction like that in which they engaged during the period of preparation for the holding of the elections.

With the accession to power in South Africa of a democratically elected Government, the task of the international community, in our view, lies in facilitating as much as possible the speedy return of South Africa to the world family of nations and the complete elimination of all barriers on the path to the achievement of that objective.

The Russian delegation notes with satisfaction that the consensus resolution adopted today by the General Assembly, which brings down the curtain on the period of apartheid, will give additional impetus to the process of the speedy reintegration of a new, democratic South Africa into the world community and that it opens the door wide to the full and active involvement of South Africa in multilateral cooperation.

The democratic reforms in South Africa, culminating in the creation of the Government of National Unity, has radically changed the situation throughout the African continent. The apartheid regime, one of the main destabilizing factors in Africa, has been eliminated. Now the States of the continent are able to focus their efforts on solving other important problems, including those linked with regional conflicts.

We hope that the emergence of a new, democratic State in southern Africa will improve the military and political situation in that sub-region, now being torn apart by conflicts. In this connection, we note with satisfaction the clearly expressed intention of the Government of South Africa to make its contribution to strengthening peace and stability everywhere, including the African continent. It is important that South Africa's significant economic, scientific and technical potential become a kind of locomotive capable, with time, of helping to pull the sub-region out of its permanent state of economic stagnation.

In this connection, we are inspired with hope by statements made by leaders of South Africa of their readiness to promote regional economic integration in every way. Moreover, the South African Government will have to decide many urgent and major internal social problems, and in this respect we believe they are right in feeling that they should count on assistance from the international community.

In confirming our readiness to cooperate fully with a democratic South Africa, we express the certainty that the good relations existing between our countries and peoples will be developed further, in the interest of international peace and prosperity.

Mr. Rakotondramboa (Madagascar) *(interpretation from French):* On this historic day, Madagascar shares the joy and pride of the South African people. It is a new South Africa that we congratulate today upon regaining, or more exactly taking, its place in this forum. South African brothers, your brothers and neighbours in Madagascar welcome you most warmly.

Our congratulations go as well to the United Nations for its perseverance. Faithful to the spirit of the Charter, the Organization, for long decades of struggle against all odds, provided liberation movements with its moral support and material aid. As proof of this, I shall cite only the total commitment of the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa to its task of assisting in the elections last April.

We hail also the combined efforts of the organs and agencies associated with the United Nations and the tireless efforts of intergovernmental and regional organizations, such as the Organization of African Unity, the Commonwealth and the European Union, to mention only some, as well as non-governmental organizations. We can affirm that the international community as a whole has presented a united front in combating this crime against humanity: apartheid.

I hope I will be forgiven if I reserve a special tribute for the Special Committee against Apartheid. By its many-sided and coordinated activities, its unfailing support for the black majority, its unconditional dedication to the cause of freedom, it contributed greatly to leading South Africa to democracy.

The social disparities almost everywhere in the world, caused by difficult economic conditions, contain the seeds of political instability and the ever-present threat of ethnic conflicts, especially in Africa. The dangers will increase in the post-apartheid period. For these reasons, Madagascar joins in the appeal contained in the resolution adopted this morning to the international community to continue to provide generous assistance to South Africa. We also endorse the request to the Secretary-General to consider the appointment, in consultation with the South African Government, of a high-level coordinator for United Nations development activities in South Africa.

Let me conclude my statement where I began it, by congratulating the now united people of South Africa, which has accomplished the miracle that all hoped for and no one dared to believe in - the achievement of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. The wisdom of the South Africans is reflected in their spirit of reconciliation. The determination to close the chapter on apartheid and, together, to turn towards the future and build a more just and prosperous society attests to their love for their common country. South Africa, which only yesterday was a synonym for oppression and shame, is now becoming a symbol of concord.

South Africans have the great fortune, envied by many countries, of having President Mandela and Mr. de Klerk, two men who desire to go beyond the bitterness of the victims and the privileges of the oppressors, personal feelings and ambitions, so that their noble vision of the future can take shape.

Our fervent wishes for success go to this gallant people in the arduous task of reconciliation and recovery it faces. South African brothers, please succeed. This is an imperative duty that you must discharge and thereby serve as an example to Africa and the rest of the world.

Mr. Yaakobi (Israel): Today is a great day in world history. It is a great day for the United Nations. And it is a great day for democracy.

Today's proceedings are an expression of one of the most dramatic, meaningful changes that have taken place in our time.

The events in South Africa are a victory of the human spirit. They offer testimony to the ability of nations, races and ethnic and religious groups to live together in peace, dignity and mutual respect. They offer testimony to the vision and courage of leaders who understand the needs of the future and who have the wisdom to show their peoples the way. To President Mandela and Vice-President de Klerk I extend my sincere respect and admiration.

Like all peoples throughout the world, the people of Israel were inspired by the momentous changes in South Africa. For 2,000 years, the Jewish people have striven for freedom, to restore its national home, to have a State of its own again. We have striven for peace in the Middle East. Now we are privileged to witness two dramatic events at the same time. The changes in South Africa and the peace process in the Middle East are both expressions of a new era in human history - expressions of the great human spirit.

Israel welcomes South Africa as it rejoins the community of nations. We wish the new Government of South Africa success in building a new society, and full cooperation with the Member States of the United Nations.

Mr. Maycock (Barbados): My delegation could not be happier than to be able to join in the debate on this item, "Elimination of Apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa", which has been on the agenda of the General Assembly for almost half a century, but which we now happily address for the final time. We join in the joyous celebration of the demise of the era of apartheid, which was accomplished through the valiant efforts and shedding of blood of countless men, women and children of South Africa.

In this respect, we are not unmindful of the sterling role played by the United Nations, the Commonwealth, the Organization of African Unity and other institutions, as well as individuals.

This occasion is indeed a fitting sequel to that historic milestone reached on 10 May 1994, when Mr. Nelson Mandela was installed as the first President of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. That

momentous achievement represented a great triumph not only for the people of South Africa but for all people of the great continent of Africa, as well as for all of us who believe in the dignity and worth of the human being, and in the right of all mankind to enjoy fundamental human rights.

Barbados welcomes the return of South Africa to the community of nations and the unanimous decision to lift the suspension imposed by the General Assembly on 12 November 1974, thereby permitting the Republic of South Africa to become once again a full participant in the work of the United Nations.

Barbados congratulates the Government and people of South Africa on the unusually high level of cooperation and consensus they have been able to forge in such a short time under the leadership of President Mandela. It is quite clear that South Africa is well placed to play a significant role in this Organization, having now earned the moral right to do so. It is also quite clear that there is much for the international community as a whole to learn from the new South African experience.

It would constitute a great disservice to the people of South Africa if we dared think that the grave socio-economic imbalances inherited from the awesome legacy of the long-entrenched system of apartheid could be wished away through the simple act of protocol performed by us today. The fragile bud of democracy blossoming in South Africa must be carefully nurtured, or it may wither on the vine. The infusion of an appropriate level of international economic aid is therefore vital to guiding South Africa along the path to sustainable development.

The Special Committee against Apartheid, which Barbados commends for the important role it has played in eliminating apartheid, was authorized by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/159 B of 20 December 1993 to continue to monitor developments in South Africa. In its report contained in document A/48/22/Add.1, the Special Committee provides a thorough analysis of conditions in South Africa, including the socio-economic situation there. The report presents a compelling argument for devising an agenda for the reconstruction of South Africa.

Barbados has always sought to do what it could to contribute to the demise of apartheid. Barbados now pledges its full cooperation to the Government of South Africa as it strives to chart new frontiers of development and to improve the quality of life of its citizens.

Mr. Ricardes (Argentina) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: My delegation is greatly pleased at the entry into force of the first non-racial, democratic Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, and the holding of the first elections to have respected the principle of one man, one vote. These events put an end to the unjust apartheid regime in South Africa.

We want to underscore the wisdom, flexibility and political courage that South Africa's political leaders showed in negotiating the agreements uprooting apartheid from the soil of South Africa. This is an event that serves as an example for the international community. We also emphasize the courage shown by the people of South Africa in their arduous historic struggle to recover their inherent rights, a struggle they waged until they achieved a united, democratic, non-racial nation. The success of the process should not make us forget the hard road travelled by many South Africans, or the loss of human life. To all those South Africans we pay a sincere tribute.

The international community can feel proud at its important contribution to the process of the political transformation of South Africa, including the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA).

In its support for the struggle of the South African people, the Argentine Republic adopted many important measures, including its May 1986 decision to break off diplomatic relations with the white minority regime; subsequently, in August 1991, we re-established full relations between our two States with a view to stimulating and encouraging the process of change in South Africa.

Argentina is glad to see the Republic of South Africa fully reincorporated into the United Nations; we are confident that its activities within the Organization will help to carry out the purposes and principles of the Charter. In that context, we hope that South Africa will soon participate actively in the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic.

We join in the Assembly's appeal to the international community for generous assistance to the Government and the people of South Africa with a view to eliminating the economic, social and cultural imbalances caused by apartheid and to contributing to the stable, peaceful development that recently began with the elections of 26 to 29 April 1994.

With the adoption of today's resolution, we mark the successful fulfilment of the mandate of the Special Committee against Apartheid, which was established by the General Assembly on 6 November 1962. We are grateful for the intensive work carried out by the Committee and its Chairman, Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

I wish finally to assure the Government and the people of South Africa of the full cooperation and friendship of the Government and the people of Argentina in the new course on which they have embarked.

Mr. Hudyma (Ukraine): The profound analysis and deep evaluation of the process of the elimination of apartheid is still to come. However, at present we can definitely state that the universal and non-racial elections in South Africa in April 1994 and the democratic changes that have followed have marked the final page of the existence in South Africa of the disgraceful and illegal division of people according to the colour of their skin.

With the adoption of today's resolution, the mandate of the Special Committee against Apartheid expires. This means that the United Nations has successfully terminated its activities, carried out over many years, aimed at the elimination of this source of tension and conflict in southern Africa.

In this connection, the delegation of Ukraine would like to express its sincere appreciation to the Special Committee and its Chairman, Mr. Gambari, and to the Secretary-General for their great efforts and contribution to what is indeed a historic achievement.

As a Member of the United Nations, and a member and Vice-Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, Ukraine takes pride in the fact that for more than three decades it has taken an active part in the joint efforts of the international community directed towards the full and final elimination of the disgraceful phenomenon of apartheid.

To our mind, today it is necessary to consolidate and strengthen the democratic achievement in South Africa. Accordingly, the delegation of Ukraine calls upon the international community to continue to contribute to the final and irreversible transformation of the South African Republic to democracy and to the development of its society in harmony and prosperity.

The resolution we have just adopted will facilitate such a transformation. We welcome the resumption by the Republic of South Africa of its place in the General Assembly and other United Nations bodies. Ukraine is ready to develop mutually beneficial cooperation with South Africa, both on a bilateral level and within the framework of international organizations.

Mr. Rahman (Bangladesh): This resumption of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly today is a truly historic and happy occasion. The two resolutions we have adopted unanimously this morning mark the end of a dark chapter; they mark the dismantling of apartheid.

We also celebrate today the fulfilment of a long-cherished dream: the rebirth of a dynamic and free nation and its restoration to the United Nations after almost two decades of suspension. Bangladesh is proud to welcome into our midst a new, united, democratic, non-racial South Africa.

The international community has for over four decades struggled to end the abhorrent system of apartheid. The United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Commonwealth, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and, indeed, all international, regional and non-governmental organizations, as well as countless individuals, have contributed towards this end with uncompromising consistency and perseverance.

Yet this would not have been possible without the determination and sacrifice of the people of South Africa themselves and their ultimate choice in favour of pragmatism and forbearance. The victory over apartheid is, without doubt, the victory of the people of South Africa. Their joy, however, is universally shared. Bangladesh is proud to have played its part in this noble endeavour.

We congratulate President Nelson Mandela and Vice-President de Klerk, among other South African leaders, on their vision and statesmanship in leading their country to this happy end, through the dedicated pursuit of a peaceful process of negotiation to lay the foundation of a non-racial, democratic society and the Government of National Unity. The progress that has been made is a singular and remarkable achievement that speaks of the wisdom and maturity of the South African people and leadership.

Our commendation and tribute are extended to the Special Committee against Apartheid, which over decades has remained the critical focal point of actions to eliminate apartheid. Its mandate has come to a successful conclusion, and special credit is due to the Chairman, Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari, the members of the Committee, the Secretary-General and his dedicated staff in the Centre against Apartheid.

Bangladesh wholeheartedly endorses the call in the resolutions adopted today for financial and material support for the reconstruction and development efforts of the Government of South Africa. We also fully support the request for the appointment of a high-level coordinator for United Nations development activities in South Africa.

May I say in conclusion that Bangladesh believes that this meeting marks a momentous milestone in the progress of mankind in promoting human solidarity and tolerance and the consolidation of our global society. Bangladesh stands wholeheartedly committed to strengthening our friendship and cooperation with the Government and people of South Africa and will contribute in any way we can to helping it address the challenge of the post-apartheid era.

Mr. Batu (Turkey): My delegation is proud to congratulate South Africa and its people on this historic occasion which, in essence, is the foundation of a new era signalling victory for all humanity.

The elimination of apartheid and the establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa crown the efforts and determined actions of a society which has finally achieved this seemingly impossible feat after many years of racism. Thanks to the spirit of moderation so eloquently displayed by President Mandela and Vice-President de Klerk, this human rights crusade has managed to become the single most important and viable expression of faith and good will in a peaceful transition towards equal rights for all.

I wish to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General and to Ambassador Gambari, Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, and to all those within the United Nations and the international community whose tireless efforts helped to bring about the elimination of apartheid.

It is a great privilege to be present on this historic day when we welcome South Africa back to the General Assembly with full voting rights.

Now that the General Assembly has accepted the new South Africa with full voting rights, we welcome the adoption of the resolution terminating the mandate of the Special Committee against Apartheid and deleting from the provisional agenda of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly the item "Elimination of apartheid and the establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa".

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our concern for the peaceful resolution of the continuing conflicts which have been spreading in other parts of the world. The peaceful realization of South African democracy is a prime example of a nation that struggled successfully against all odds to unite behind a perspective shared by the world.

I have been brief, taking into account the time constraints of the General Assembly. I should like to conclude my statement by offering our support and cooperation for the continued development towards peace in South Africa and elsewhere.

Mr. Flores Olea (Mexico) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The General Assembly is meeting to bear testimony to the fulfilment of one of the highest aims that it has set for itself since its foundation: eliminating apartheid and assisting in the establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. In an international environment characterized by uncertainty and the emergence of hotbeds of tension and conflict, the meeting we are holding today constitutes a triumph of ethics, reason and adherence to the institutions that have created the framework for relations between free States.

The recent developments that have led South Africa to democracy, principally the holding of free elections and the establishment of a Government of National Unity by peaceful means, constitute an example of political civility for all the world to see. The South African people deserve to be congratulated and supported in their ceaseless effort to attain freedom and to lay the foundations for the reconstruction of their economic and social institutions. The success of South Africa's transformation also belongs to the international community, which expressed its firm determination to eliminate the shameful system of racial discrimination and was able to take effective action through the United Nations, despite the incomprehensible opposition, for many years, of some of its most influential members.

Special credit should go to the front-line countries, which staunchly resisted the political and economic consequences of the struggle against apartheid. The Special Committee against Apartheid and its Chairman, Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari, can also feel satisfaction at the work they achieved over the 30-year lifespan of the Committee, which is now coming to fruition through the re-entry of a free and united South Africa into the international community and into international forums of cooperation and coordination.

The delegation of Mexico wishes to place on record its satisfaction at the fact that the General Assembly is culminating a process whereby it is renewing its role in the solution of world problems. The General Assembly is now taking on added importance as a forum for dialogue, coordination and the solution of complex and difficult situations.

Although apartheid has been eliminated, its consequences are still present in South African society. To overcome them, it is essential to have the cooperation of all in the building of new structures that will consolidate change and enable all South Africans fully to enjoy the rights that belong to individuals in a free, egalitarian and democratic society.

To the people and Government of South Africa, I reiterate the congratulations of the Government of Mexico for the determination and courage they have shown throughout a process of profound and difficult change. The peaceful process of change in South Africa stands as an example to the international community. We all are certain that this country, now free and democratic, will also contribute in an exemplary way to the peace and security of all nations. Its experience is now part of the best experience of our civilization.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt) *(interpretation from Arabic):* It gives me pleasure to speak today before the General Assembly under agenda item 38, "Elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa".

Today is a day that has been long-awaited. It is a momentous occasion for Africa and for the whole world to see the end of the system of apartheid and the policy of racial discrimination, which represented a stigma on humankind for many long decades.

The recent free elections held in the Republic of South Africa represent a watershed in the history of Africa as a whole. Those elections led to the establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa, which is an enormous gain for all peoples everywhere. This underscores a firm historical fact: that peoples, in their struggle for survival and freedom, will eventually prevail.

I would be remiss if I failed to pay tribute to the United Nations and to its organs for the support they lent to the people of South Africa and for mobilizing world public opinion against apartheid, which contributed to the peaceful resolution of the situation in southern Africa.

The General Assembly this morning adopted a resolution to end the mandate of the Special Committee against Apartheid. In paying tribute to the Committee and to its Chairman, Ambassador Gambari, the delegation of Egypt notes that the mandate of the Committee has been brought to an end after, not before, the ending of the obnoxious system of apartheid.

The people of Egypt reaffirm their solidarity with the people of South Africa and welcome the birth of a free South Africa and its return to the General Assembly of the United Nations. They also welcome the ending of the suspension of its membership now that power has been transferred to a democratic, multi-racial Government unencumbered by discrimination on the basis of skin colour, creed or race.

The democratic process is a long one indeed, and is not always easy. South Africa is now facing the enormously daunting task of putting together the democratic infrastructure needed for the prosperity of the new society. The delegation of Egypt welcomes the provision in operative paragraph 11 of the resolution regarding the request to consider the appointment of a high-level coordinator for United Nations development activities in South Africa.

Talk about South Africa is always associated with talk about the Organization of African Unity, which has striven since its inception for the liberation of the peoples of Africa from colonialism and discrimination in all its forms. Here, I should like to underscore the historic role played by the Organization of African Unity over the past years, especially the efforts of its current Secretary General, Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim.

In closing, the delegation of Egypt ventures to hope that the settlement of the South African problem will serve as a model in addressing other, longstanding issues on the Assembly's agenda - notably the question of the

legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. May international developments permit us to gather again soon to remove other important items from the agenda.

Mr. Karukubiro Kamunanwire (Uganda): As we bury apartheid, it is with a great deal of joy that, as the last speaker on this item, Uganda welcomes the task of hammering the last nail into the coffin. My delegation joins previous speakers in welcoming into the community of free nations and into the General Assembly of the United Nations a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

My country was at the forefront of the struggle against apartheid. We rightly considered apartheid and racial discrimination to be heinous crimes against humanity, human dignity and human beings. We considered apartheid to be anti-progress and a dead weight which was hampering the unity and progress of southern Africa and Africa as a whole. This is why we spared no effort in the fight for a just, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

I take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude to the United Nations and to the Members which, over decades, took a resolute stand against apartheid. I thank the Special Committee against Apartheid and its Chairman, Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari of Nigeria, for the relentless manner in which the Committee executed its mandate. All these efforts have now been deservedly rewarded. I also congratulate the Secretary-General and his Special Representative to South Africa for a job very well done.

We welcome the election of President Mandela to the helm of his free country. We trust that, with his vision, wisdom and unique statesmanship, he will ably guide South Africa into a peaceful, stable and prosperous future.

We are confident that South Africa has a dynamic role to play in the community of free States. A free South Africa is certainly a tremendous boost to the countries of our region in terms of its economic and political potential. My Government is overjoyed at this epochal development in our region and is extremely happy to be associated in totality with the very historic occasion we are witnessing today.

I once again join all other delegations in welcoming back into our fold a free Republic of South Africa.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in this debate. We have thus concluded our consideration of agenda item 38. I thank all Members for their cooperation in making this a most memorable day.

The meeting rose at 9.15 p.m.